ISSUE 4 | OCTOBER 2010

Fighting Fantazine

THE FIGHTING FANTASY FAN MAGAZINE

PUTTING PEN TO PAPER

TONY HOUGH TALKS ABOUT
HIS GAMEBOOK WORK
AND NEW ART BOOK

A **BRAND NEW** *FIGHTING FANTASY* MINI ADVENTURE!
DARE **YOU** GO **IN SEARCH OF THE MUNGIES' GOLD**?

すごいぞ！

"THE FACT OF FICTION"
GOES JAPANESE WITH
SWORD OF THE SAMURAI

JUST BECAUSE...

EVERYTHING YOU EVER
NEEDED TO LEARN DIRECT
FROM THE PAGES OF
WARLOCK MAGAZINE!

PLUS
AN UNIQUE NEW
COMIC BEGINS
AND
HOW TO PEN A
FIGHTING FANTASY
ADVENTURE!

letter from the editor

We are back again once more with a brand new issue of *Fighting Fantazine*. It feels good to be here bringing you the fourth issue of this fan magazine, even if it took longer than expected! That this issue took twice as long to produce is the downside to being a fan production – the real lives of all those involved has to take precedence over hobbies I'm afraid. Of course, one way that you the reader can help mitigate against such delays in future is to consider contributing. The more material we have to hand the easier it is to produce an issue.

This issue we were hoping to bring you the results of the survey we began in issue #3. However that has been pushed back to the following issue after an extension to the due date for votes. The results already look intriguing, so hang around for issue 5 to find out what is what...

Meanwhile "Out of the Pit" misses an issue this time around due to space and a lack of submitted monsters. If you want to compile some entries for monsters from adventures published after the 1985 book was released, or have original creatures you'd like to share with the rest of the *Fighting Fantasy* community, send them on in. Oh, and we're still on the lookout for people to help with a reviews section of the magazine.

But enough of what isn't in this issue, time to focus on what is! Beyond the chat with *Fighting Fantasy* artist Tony Hough, who had a very nice surprise contribution to bring to his interview, we have an adaptation of the old *Warlock* board game *In Search of the Mungies' Gold* as the mini adventure for this issue and a look at the geography of *Shadowmaster*, both from Warren McGuire. Japan gets a double look in through the start of a new manga-style comic, *The Book in Which You are the Hero*, from Japanese fan Aida Rintarou, which brings an interesting twist to the concept of collecting the gamebooks, and "The Fact of Fiction" article on *Sword of the Samurai*.

What else do we have for you? Amongst the material on offer this issue, Andrew Wright begins a new series offering some advice for those of you wanting to take a stab at penning your own *Fighting Fantasy* adventure, a specific French translation gets a closer look from Julien Meneldur, and Seb Forder goes about spicing up those dull provisions.

And finally on to other matters. In addition to the magazine web site (see the guff in the section below for the URL), the magazine now has a page on Facebook for those of you so inclined to join. The page has information and updates on the magazine, along with the opportunity to discuss the magazine and the occasional sneak preview of forthcoming material. Feedback on the magazine is welcomed and encouraged, and I will once again thank you for taking the time to obtain this magazine and wish you happy reading!

Alex

Fighting Fantazine – The Fighting Fantasy Fan Magazine
Issue 4. Published October 2010.
Published three to four times a year.
http://fightingfantazine.bravehost.com/

Fighting Fantazine – The Fighting Fantasy Fan Magazine is an outgrowth of the Yahoo! discussion group *Titan Rebuilding* which can be found at:
Games.groups.yahoo.com/group/titan_rebuilding/
and the wikia *Titannica* found here:
Fightingfantasy.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page

CONTRIBUTIONS
Contributions to the fanzine in the form of letters, articles, reviews, fanfiction, artwork, comics et cetera are welcomed and readily invited. These can be sent to the editor via e-mail as long as it is a standard format like JPEG and the scan is of high quality (1200 dpi preferred).

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE:
December 17th 2010

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Fighting Fantazine

THE FIGHTING FANTASY FAN MAGAZINE

ISSUE 4 | OCTOBER 2010

FEATURES

06 interview:
HOUGH DRAFT

Tony Hough chats to *Fighting Fantazine* about the gamebooks and explains what else he has been up to.

16 mini adventure:
IN SEARCH OF THE MUNGIES' GOLD

by **Warren McGuire**
Illustrated by **Alexander Ballingall**

Mauristatia, wild land of cloud-capped mountains, shadowy valleys, arcane cults, and fell beasts. Great treasures are said to lie hidden in its depths, but few have been foolhardy enough to risk body and soul in pursuit of them. Dare YOU enter Mauristatia in search of the fabled Mungies' Gold? And will you return to tell the tale?

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SWORD OF THE SAMURAI

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Turn to paragraph **1**.

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With thanks to: Tony Hough, Aida Rintarou, Natalie Roberts, Junsuke Sawaoka, Nick Sidwell, and the rest of the team at *Titan Rebuilding* for their support.

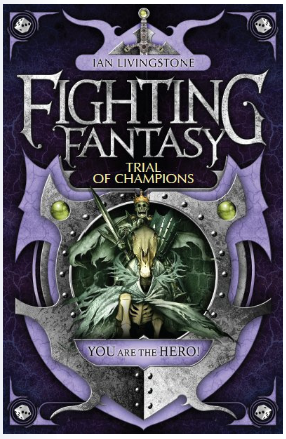
Where possible, permission from the artists has been sought for the reproduction of *Fighting Fantasy* art. If you have any queries about this, please contact the Editor. "Burning wreckage and rubble from the tower rain down all around you but, miraculously, you are not hit."

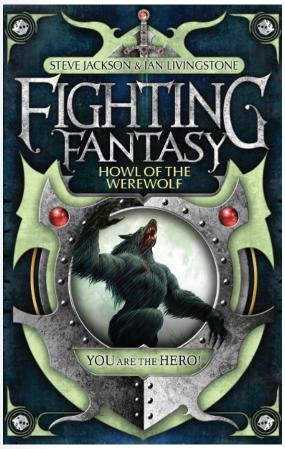
OMENS & AUGURIES

HOWLING INTO STORES...

New *Fighting Fantasy* Releases

Wizard Books is continuing its series of re-releases of *Fighting Fantasy* books with *House of Hell*, *Eye of the Dragon*, *Howl of the Werewolf* and *Trial of Champions* now available. All four books have essentially the same cover art the previous versions did. Each book retails for 5.99 GBP. Four titles have been scheduled for the first third of next year. For release in February are *Curse of the Mummy* (#13) and *Forest of Doom* (#14) and in April *Armies of Death* (#15) and *Appointment with F.E.A.R.* (#16).





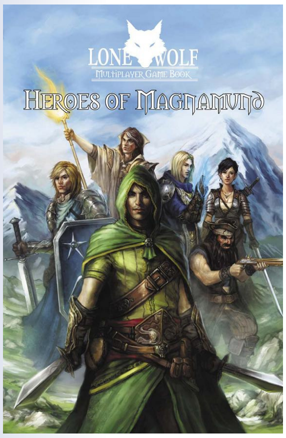
Word of a new gamebook penned by Ian Livingstone has arisen after the author was quoted in *Vice* magazine (Volume 16, No. 12) as saying:

> *"I'm currently writing a new* Fighting Fantasy *gaming book. I can't tell you much about it but there won't be a dragon or an orc in it."*

In the previous issue we spoke about the feature film based on the *House of Hell* gamebook. Now the production company is announcing they will be releasing a videogame version of the book in Blu-Ray format, as well as an online interactive version. The online version will contain hidden goals and players will be able to win prizes if they achieve them. No release dates have been announced yet.

Last but not least, Big Blue Bubble have released their iPhone/iPod Touch/iPad versions of *The Citadel of Chaos* and *Creature of Havoc*, both of which are available at the iTunes store for 1.79 GBP each. According to the official *Fighting Fantasy* website, the electronic book has some improvements over the paper versions. As we announced in a previous issue, *City of Thieves* is set to be released in this format as well.

Goodies from the Mongoose



Despite being in something of a hiatus, Mongoose reportedly are keeping up with their plans to release new versions of the *Lone Wolf* gamebooks with the collector's edition of Book 14 (*The Captives of Kaag*) and book 15 (*The Darke Crusade*). They can only be bought from the company's site at www.mongoosepublishing.com. Price will be 15.00 GBP each.

While the first *Lone Wolf* RPG released by the company was, apparently, not much of a commercial success (they do not even advertise it on their site anymore), their lite *Lone Wolf Multiplayer Gamebook* excited them enough to plan a line of supplements for it. The following books have been announced: *Terror of the Darklords*, an adventure book; *Heroes of Magnamund*, a book with character classes, and *Sommerlund*, a sourcebook detailing this kingdom. *Heroes of Magnamund* reportedly has Joe Dever himself as coauthor, though I doubt he did much of the writing himself. Further to this, the *Magnamund Bestiary* is also to be released. Each book is priced at 10.00 GBP.

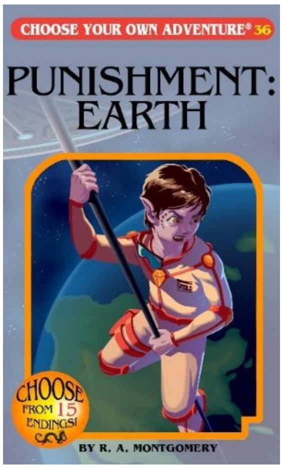
Fabled *Fabled Lands*

Greywood Publishing has acquired the rights to publish a tabletop role-playing game based on the *Fabled Lands* series of gamebooks by Dave Morris and Jamie Thomson. As readers surely know, only six of the projected twelve gamebooks from the original series saw the light of day.

The RPG rules manual and the first source book (which details the setting for *The War-Torn Kingdom*, the first gamebook in the series) are expected in late 2010/early 2011. The publisher has promised to release a sourcebook for each of the twelve planned settings from the original series. You can view the planned covers of the first books here: www.greywoodpublishing.com/id35.html.

A version of the gamebooks to be playable on the iPhone is said to be in the works by French company Megara Entertainment, but at present the details on it are sketchy. You can view some of the artwork over at russnicholson.blogspot.com/2010/08/news.html . This release is supposed to be part of a larger project to generate enough interest in the series to warrant completion of the six books that were never published, in ebook form. Let's keep our fingers crossed. Dave is also said to be in talks for a rerelease of the classic *Blood Sword* gamebooks.

Choose Your Own *CYOA*



R. A. Montgomery has also been busy marketing gamebooks for a new generation of readers. His company has released *Return to the Haunted House*, a sequel to the classic Skylark book *The Haunted House*. He has three other titles planned for October: *Your Grandparents are Zombies!*, *Monsters of the Deep* and (for older readers) *Punishment: Earth*. Judging by the blurbs, both books look quite interesting, but I don't expect them to generate much excitement among Mr. Montgomery's detractors. Each book retails for 6.99 USD.

For the Troll Lovers Out There

TrollsZine, a fanzine like ours, but dedicated to *Tunnels & Trolls*, has kept up its commitment to release a solo adventure each issue. The second instalment contains a 55-section fantasy adventure titled *Dark Rising*. The issue can be dowloaded for free as a pdf at www.drivethrurpg.com or www.rpgnow.com. As a note, it's Flying Buffalo who actually distributes the fanzine. It's good to know that a fanzine can be supported and encouraged by the rights holder of the original material! Another publisher called Peryton has been releasing a semi-periodical with *Tunnels & Trolls* material called *Elder Tunnels*. The Halloween 2010 issue includes a solo adventure for the system. You can purchase a print copy for 7.95 USD at www.perytonpublishing.com/ or a pdf from www.rpgnow.com for 4.95 USD.

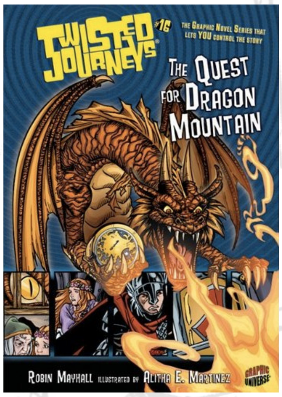
If You Prefer Dragons…

This has been mentioned before, but it deserves a reminder. *Dungeons & Dragons Essentials*, a boxed set intended to introduce newbies to the *Dungeons & Dragons* game using Fourth Edition rules, contains an introductory solo adventure in a similar manner to the old 'Red Box' edition. The set is available for 19.99 USD.

Eighties Nostalgia

Apparently the idea of publishing pick-a-paths as tie-ins for feature films took hold after *Prince of Persia*. Now Disney are releasing an *It's Your Call* book based on the upcoming *Tron: Legacy* film. Titled *Initiate Sequence*, it will be released in October and will retail for 4.99 USD.

Twisted Journeys Continues On

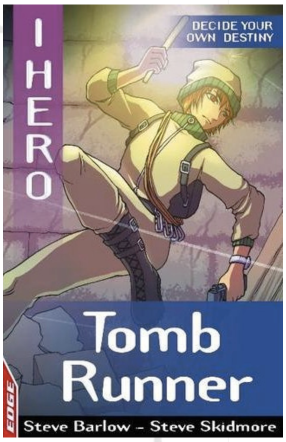

TWISTED JOURNEYS #16
THE GRAPHIC NOVEL SERIES THAT LETS YOU CONTROL THE STORY
THE QUEST FOR DRAGON MOUNTAIN
ROBIN MAYHALL ILLUSTRATED BY ALITHA E. MARTINEZ
GRAPHIC UNIVERSE

Apparently the *Twisted Journeys* series of graphic pick-a-path books continues to find success with young audiences. That's good to know! Two more titles have been released. One is *Agent Mongoose and the Attack of the Giant Insects* (a spy story), and *The Quest for Dragon Mountain* (a fantasy story). The paperbacks are priced at 7.95 USD each (all of these books are also released in library versions, which are more expensive). As if this weren't enough, two new titles are announced for January 2011: *Horror in Space* and *Detective Frankenstein*.

Make History

2011 will also be a good year for this series of gamebooks. You can expect to experience *The Salem Witch Trials*, *The Great Depression*, *Colonial America* and the ill-fated *Orphan Trains* of the American Midwest. Each book will retail for 6.95 USD.

I, but not Claudius



On the other side of the pond (Britain to be exact), things also look good for the interactive book. The *I, Hero* series continues with two pick-a-paths: *Dragon Slayer* (a fantasy story with a Japanese setting) and *Tomb Runner* (an Indiana Jones-*Tomb Raider* genre story). Both books will appear in October and will be sold at 4.99 GBP each. Moreover, two other titles have been announced for June 2011: *Alien Storm* and *Pit of Doom*.

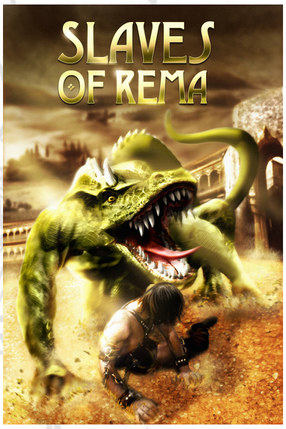
More British Goodness (or not?)

Two gamebooks based on Enid Blyton's novels are being reissued this year. *Find Adventure* and *Search for Treasure* at a price of 4.99 GBP. I haven't read the older versions (which form part of a six-book series) so I can't tell if this is good news or not. However, reissues of books 3 and 4 of the same series have already been announced for April 2011.

Zombies!

The zombie rage is apparently fading out but it continues to impact the gamebook world after the much-complimented *Zombocalypse Now*. *Zombie Death Town* is a full-system gamebook that apparently tries to evoke the George Romero zombie films. This 12-page pdf is available from www.drivethrurpg.com for 2.00 USD. Not a bad deal if you ask me.

Tin Man with a Heart of Gold



This producer of gamebooks for the iPhone has been busy for the last few months. They have released their second and third fantasy gamebooks: *The Siege of the Necromancer* by Neil Rennison and *Slaves of Rema* by Gaetano Abbondanza. Each book can be downloaded from the App store for 5.99 AUD. The company is also releasing enhanced versions of their gamebooks for the Apple iPad. There is also a fourth book in the works, *Revenant Rising* by Kieran Coghlan. Visit www.tinmangames.com.au for more information and pictures.

Dave Morris' Heart of Gold

Dave Morris has made his classic gamebook *Heart of Ice* available for free download. Visit his blog at fabledlands.blogspot.com to find the download link. Great!

Spanish-language books

Spanish publisher Hidra have also been busy launching new gamebooks into the market. *Zona Mutante*, a sci-fi book, is already out, and a new installment, titled *Misterios Subterraneos*, is also on the way. Each book retails for 9.95 EUR. Visit www.editorialhidra.com for more info.

HOUGH DRAFT

Fighting Fantazine chats with artist **Tony Hough**

Tony Hough *will be known to readers as the illustrator of four* Fighting Fantasy *gamebooks, the most recent being* Bloodbones, *and was happy to take time out from his busy schedule to talk to* Fighting Fantazine *about his contributions to the series and what he is currently up to.*

A LITTLE BACKGROUND

What is your childhood background?
Born and raised in Luton, England, middle of three children, My dad was a lorry driver. I was always curious and keen to entertain myself with reading, drawing, making odd things with plasticine and searching for creepy-crawlies.

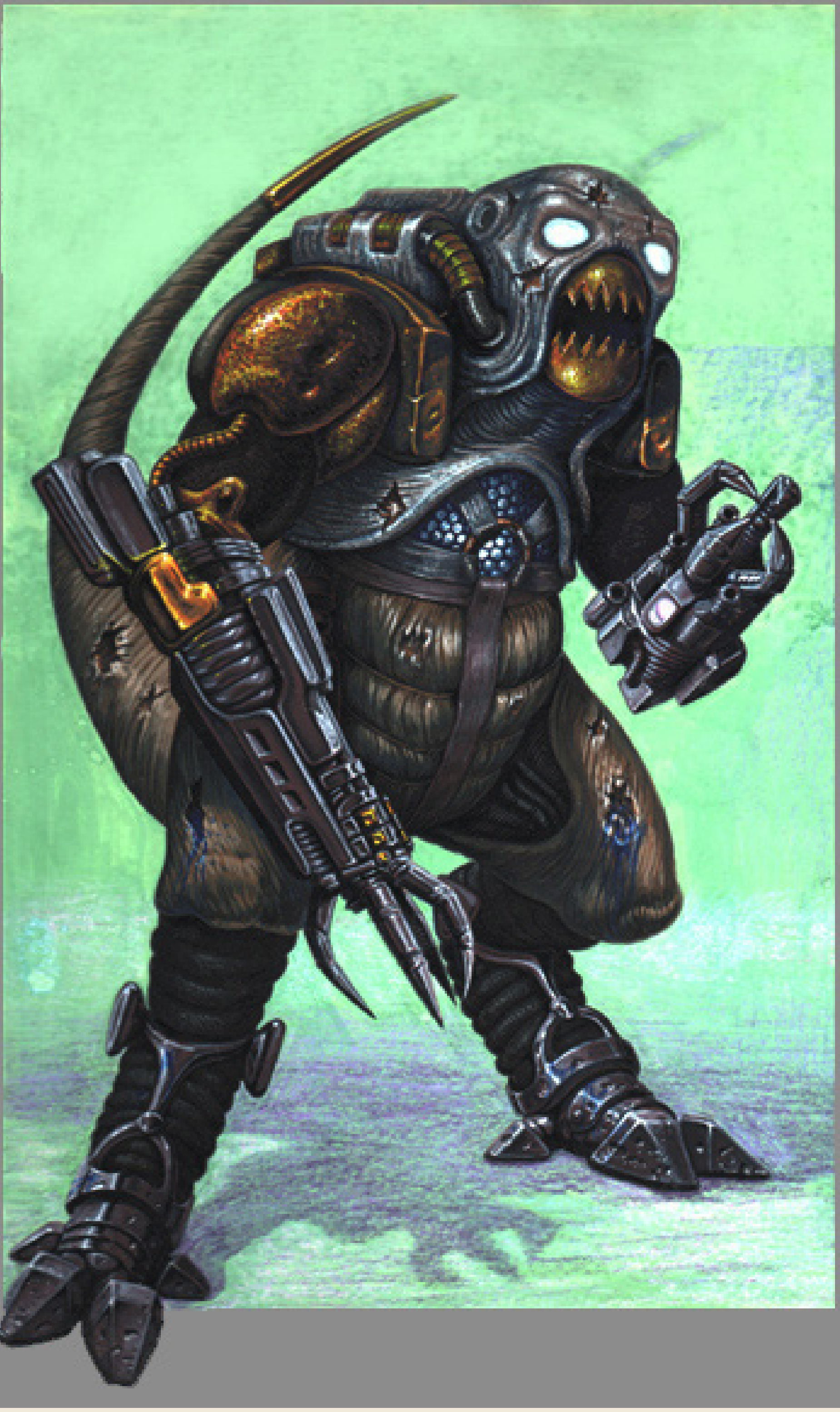
Was art something that was encourage when you were a child?
It kept me quiet and busy so my parents loved it.

As a child was art something you shared with your peers or a solo endeavour?
It was purely for my pleasure when I was a small child, in fact the end result wasn't even important. It was while I was drawing that my imagination was engaged. Later I began, on another level, to enjoy the positive reactions of others to my art and art became a form of communication. But I still just enjoy doing it!

What hobbies do you indulge in?
I enjoy live music, so I go to local gigs and regularly go to various club nights. I like a dance!. I've got a wide musical taste. The first band I ever saw live was Hawkwind, and I still love 'em.

I've been into role-playing games and tabletop wargames for a long time. I've played an awful lot of *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, *Call of Cthulhu* and *Champions*.

I also read a lot, being very interested in history, popular science, and psychology (I have a degree in psychology).



Above: A bio-synthetic supersoldier design for an unmade film adaptation of Harlan Ellison's short story *Soldier from Tomorrow* (1957). A version of this image appears in *Fragments - The Fantasy Art of Tony Hough* (2010).
Opposite page: The Byakhee as based on the descriptions of H.P. Lovecraft. Published in *Fragments - The Fantasy Art of Tony Hough*.

Art & Photo © Tony Hough, 2010. Used with permission. Visit Tonyhough.co.uk/

TALKING ART

Do you have a preferred medium for your art? *Fighting Fantazine* recently interviewed Martin McKenna who has switched almost entirely to digital art. Have you made a similar transition and if so, why?
I don't think I'd ever abandon traditional media altogether for digital. I still enjoy using them too much and I like having the artwork originals to show. It is necessary these days though to be able to create and submit work in a digital form, and over the past ten years I've been building up my digital abilities, largely using Photoshop. Recently I got hold of a decent Wacom Graphire tablet and a much better modern monitor, so it's getting easier. There are really too many advantages for a serious illustrator to ignore!

How does a typical work day go for you?
Simple: Draw all day, followed by draw all night!

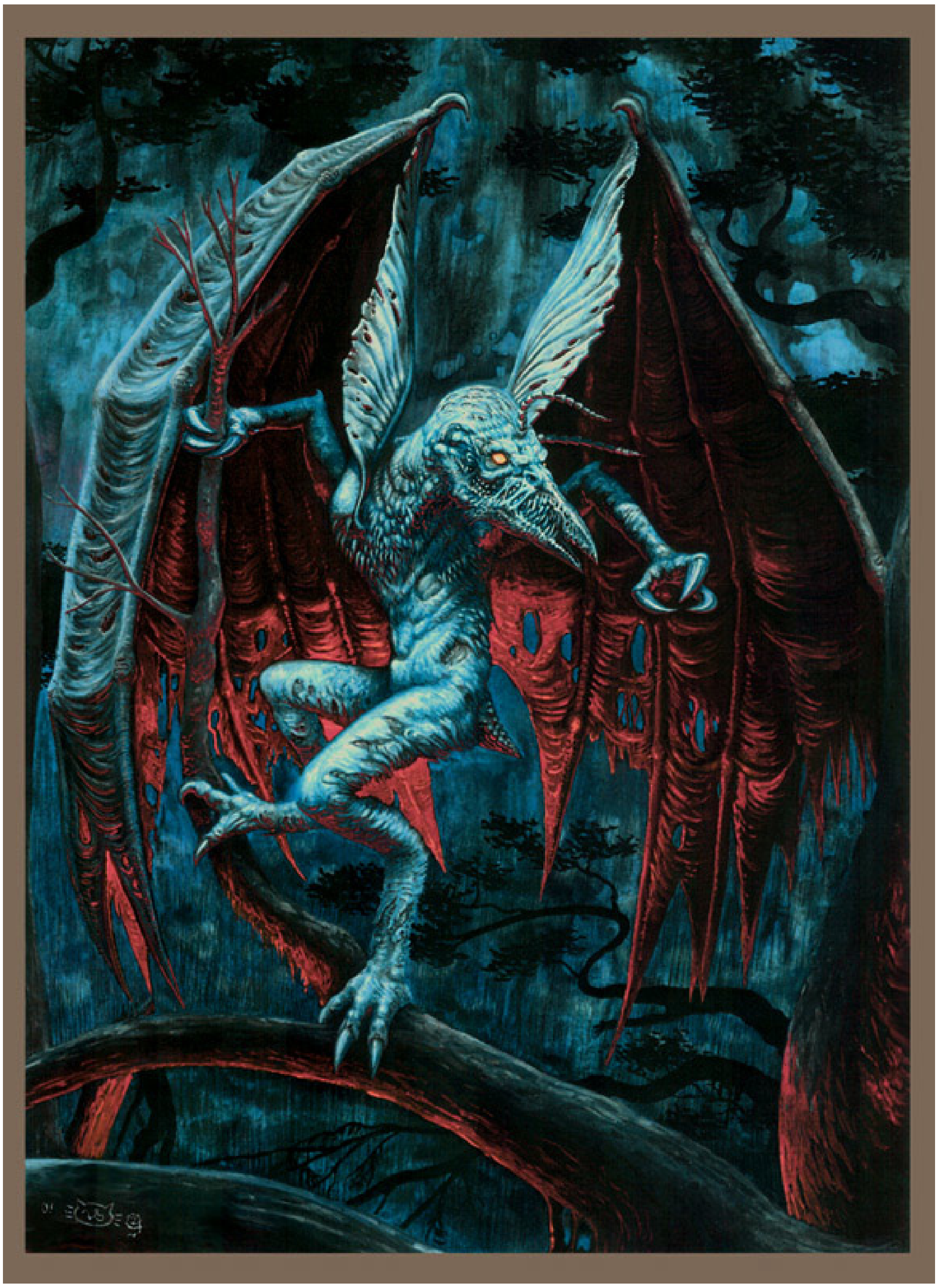
Is fantasy art your "thing", or are there other genres you would like to tackle?
I'm a "fantasy" artist in the very broadest sense of the word. I don't like to be limited by labels or "typecast"! I'll tackle any kind of subject matter really, though don't ask me to do portraits of your pets!!

When composing a picture, do you make use of reference materials, models or still life arrangements?
I did a lot of life-drawing years ago and I do often use reference when it's essential, but not always. My visual cortex is full of "how to draw this and that" and can often be relied upon to get things right.

How do you go about getting a commission these days, they come to you or you approach them?
I seek them with thimbles, I seek them with care,
I pursue them with forks and with hope
I threaten their lives with a railway-share
and charm them with smiles and with soap

Perhaps I should get an agent?

Which artists have been an inspiration to you?
Too many artists have inspired me to mention them all. Here's just a few: Gustave Dore, H.R. Giger, Patrick Woodroffe, Chris



SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

FIGHTING FANTASY

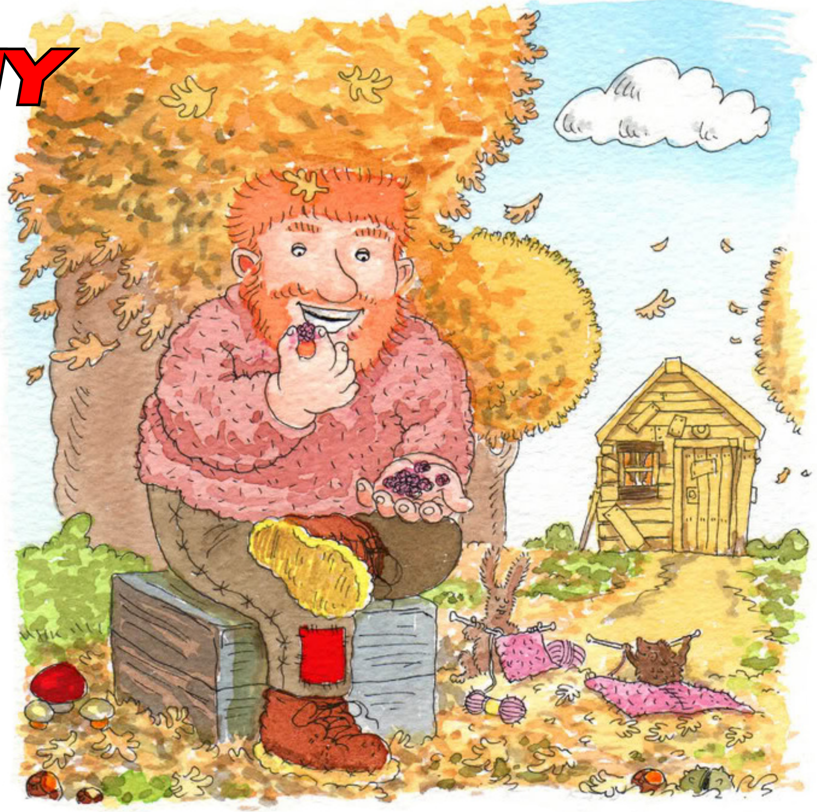
Bloodbones (2010)	Interior art*
Bloodbones (2006)	Interior art
Deathtrap Dungeon RPG (2003)	Interior art
Knights of Doom (1994)	Cover/ interior art
Night Dragon (1992)	Cover/ interior art
Spectral Stalkers (1991)	Interior art

* = reprinted material

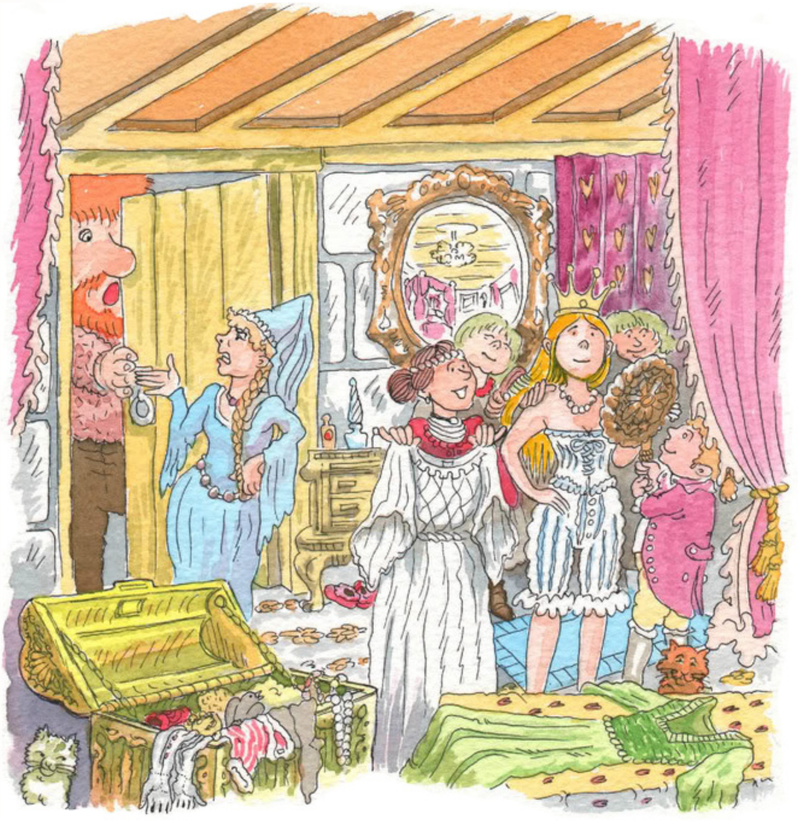
OTHER FANTASY ART

Sci-Fi Art Now (2010)	artist*
Fragments – The Fantasy Art of Tony Hough (2010)	Cover/ interior art
Fantasy Art Now (2007)	artist*
Midnight RPG (2003)	Interior art*
The Giant and DIY (1995)	Interior art
Look Where Mum Lives (1995)	Interior art
What's the Giant Going to Do? (1995)	Interior art
The Giant Goes to a Wedding (1995)	Interior art
The Giant's Year (1995)	Interior art
Games Workshop; beginning with *White Dwarf* #94 and *Warhammer 40,000: Rogue Trader* (1987~90)	Interior art*

* = one of several contributors



Above and below: Two of Tony's illustrations for Barbara Mitchelhill's *Giant* stories. Top from *The Giant's Year* and bottom from *The Giant Goes to a Wedding* (both 1995).



Art © Tony Hough, 2010. Used with permission.

Foss, Syd Mead, Virgil Finlay, John Bolton, Richard Corben, Jim Burns, Ian Miller.

Any interesting tales from your time as an artist?
I once displayed work at a convention in Birmingham, but having absolutely no money I had to hitchhike there all the way from Luton carrying the whole show, frames and all, wrapped up in a blanket. I also couldn't afford to stay at the Hotel, so I had to take my sleeping bag and kipped on a park bench in what I was later told was a notoriously rough part of Birmingham. To avoid that on the second night I hid behind a sofa in the snooker room. When I suddenly got up in the morning the poor woman sitting there got a fright. Ironically it was the wife of one of Britain's top horror writers!

Is there a book in particular you'd love to have the chance to do the cover for, perhaps a personal favourite or interesting subject matter?
Only all the books I ever loved. Joe Haldeman's *Forever War*, Yevgeny Zamiatin's *WE*, Ursula LeGuin's Earthsea books.

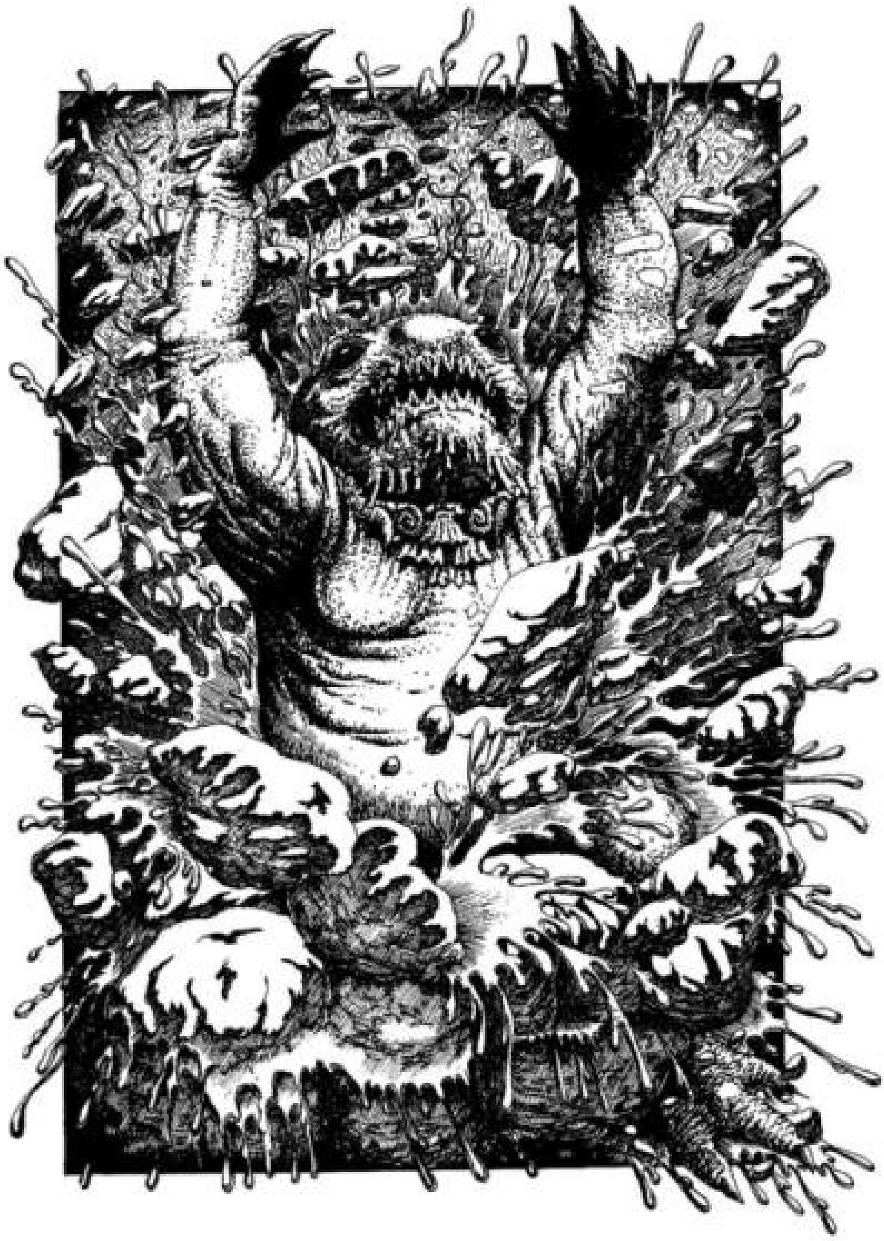
GETTING STARTED IN THE BUSINESS

Did you get into professional art straight out of education or were there some side adventures in other trades first? If so, any amusing stories from these?
It took me about five years to reach professional standard from leaving college, and I haven't through the years always been able to support myself from illustration alone. I've worked in a museum, been a Machine Operator in a factory, worked on community arts projects and a little teaching.

Your first art was apparently pictures for the Games Workshop publication *Warhammer 40,000: Rogue Trader* in 1987. How did this commission come about?
I'd sent samples of my work regularly to Games Workshop from about '82 when I left art college, but I hadn't quite been to commercial standard until then. I just suddenly got a call from John Blanche and a sample brief to show them what I could do. I was pretty lucky that the look they were aiming for, for the game, played right to my strengths.

When and where did you become a tattooist?
An old friend got me a training place at a studio in Leighton Buzzard in 2007. I was there about nine months before the recession bit and it was a case of "last in, first out". Another tattooist friend of mine stepped in and made his own small studio space available to me for a while to finish my ongoing clients.

It's a fascinating form of art requiring a huge amount of skill and I'll be happy to continue my training sometime when a place comes available locally. I have some pretty good work under my belt (not literally! I've no tattoos of my own!) already, but I'm no way competent to go into it on my own. There are enough cowboys about but I'd never want to be one!



Above: The full-page illustration to accompany paragraph 376 of *Spectral Stalkers* (1991), the book which marked Tony Hough's first contribution to the *Fighting Fantasy* range.

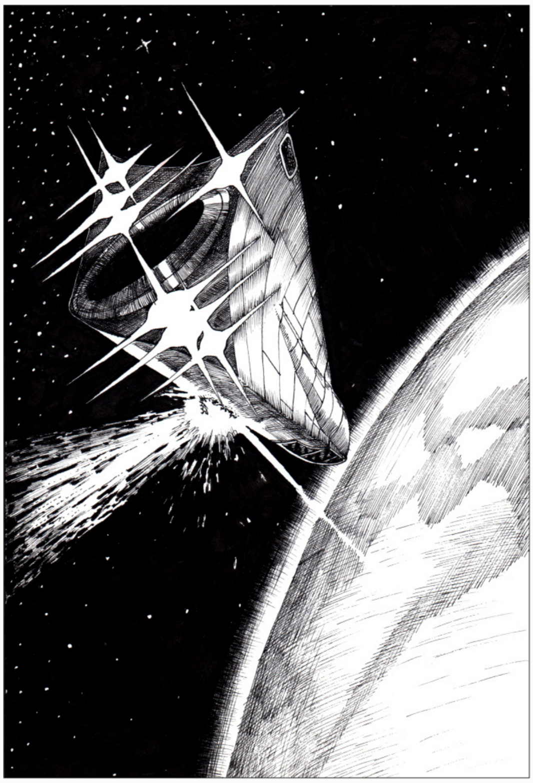
You did some work on Barbara Mitchelhill's *Giant* books. How was that for a change of pace?
I was in the second year of my Psychology degree when I got that contract and money was very tight so it was really welcome, though I had to work it around my exams! It was fun to do things in a very different style and I was very happy with them, especially the comical sheep!

FANTASTIC WORLDS

You've said on your site your are a fan of the *Fighting Fantasy* books themselves. What do you think is the attraction of the *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks?
I'm a big fan of role-playing games in general and solo gamebooks are like the same thing but in a handy-sized package that you can play on your own.

TONY'S FF ADVENTURE

(A recent graduate from the Vodermann Academy of Space Police, you are returning from a reconn mission when you are ambushed by pirates. You destroy them but lose your shields in the process. The last of them bolted for a nearby planet, so you are scanning for a possible base…)

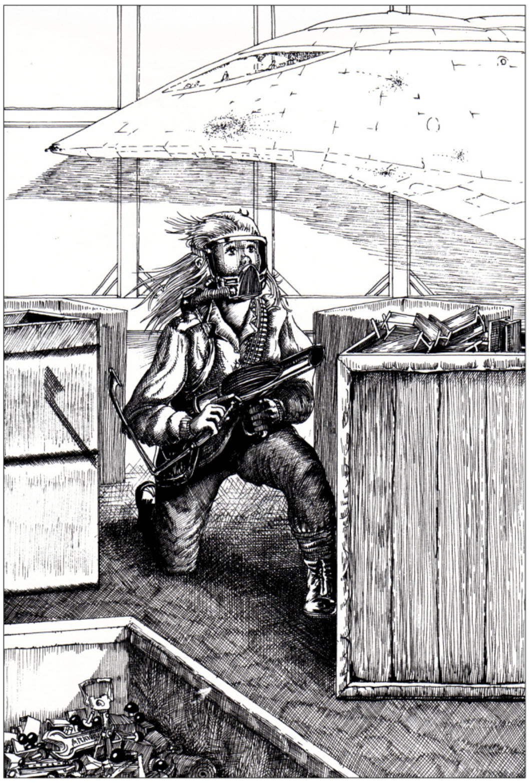


As you move into low orbit and start to scan for energy sources there's a flash of light from down below. Planetary defence laser? Your Ionchaser shudders and alarms begin to sound! Darn those Pirates! If they hadn't taken down your shields a mere PDL would have presented no threat to your advanced ship! Now there's nothing for it but to find somewhere to put down. Fast!

Your heart leaps as you see a grey-green shadow on the horizon. A small island! Now your vessel in on its last few Klicks. You get two faint energy readings: The first on the island, second in the sea? No! Some kind of tower or fort, an offshore rig of some kind with a landing platform. Tricky at this speed...

Which will you go for?

Head for the Island?
Turn to **500**.
Make for the Tower?
Turn to **61**.



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You move cautiously down the corridor from the lift, heading North until you come to the blast doors leading into the hangar deck. As you open the doors a figure in a gas mask turns and fires a stream of energy bolts at you! *Test your Skill*. If you are successful, you manage to dive for cover behind the support girder (turn to **162**). If not, turn to **152**.

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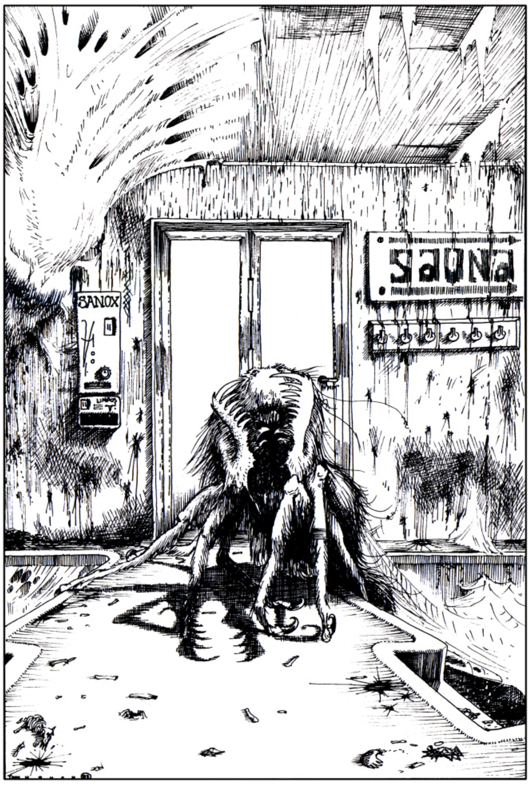
The room you enter is dim and musty. The air is hot and damp and thick with the smell of decay.The tiled floor is studded with large pits, either small swimming pools or large Jacuzzis. The floor is littered with tiny bones, those of vermin. On a walkway between two pools ahead is what appears to be a human corpse, covered in some kind of grey fluff or webbing. You move to investigate the body.

You notice that the pools seem to be filled with sheets of the same filthy cobwebs. Though small gaps you see through to the bottom of the pools, a layer of black, putrid water and bones, hundreds of them!

As you prod the shrivelled cadaver with barrel of your Loxap pistol, part of it disintegrates and a shiny red security pass falls out. Result! You pocket it and stand up to leave. This place gives you the creeps!

As you turn a horrid creature clambers out of the pit between you and the door. Will you try and frighten the creature away by making a loud noise (turn to **346**), shoot it with your Loxap pistol (turn to **12**), or try to dodge past it (turn to **141**)?



Art © Tony Hough, 2010. Used with permission.

Which is your favourite *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook to date?
Apart from the ones I illustrated... Of the older ones I loved *City of Thieves* the most, I think. You get to explore an entire, fully realised fantasy town in the space of one slim book.

What would be your one favourite piece of *Fighting Fantasy* art (not done by yourself obviously)?
My absolute favourites are the ones by Ian Miller. Always loved his work. And Iain McCaig's brilliant covers.

Any particular older *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook that you would have just loved to have illustrated given the material contained therein?
Starship Traveller, definitely! Peter Jones did a fairly nifty cover, but the internals looked rather basic. From an artist I greatly admired I expected a bit more.

Would you ever try your hand at writing a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook?
I tried writing one in the '80s. It was fun to do and quite an exciting adventure but I had trouble reigning it in – I ended up with over 600 entries, it just kept growing. I still have it in a folder behind me!

It was an sci-fi adventure in which, as a rookie starcop on a training flight, you are shot up by bandits over an outpost world and bring your ship down onto a derelict sea-fort. Now inhabited by deranged robots, lethal wildlife and desperate space-pirates, you have to fight your way through its crumbling corridors to get the parts you need to fix your ship and get home.

Then some friends and I started playing *Runequest* and the project got shelved.

See the opposite page for some example paragraphs and art for the adventure kindly supplied by Tony!

SPACED OUT — *SPECTRAL STALKERS*

How did you come to be commissioned for the *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook *Spectral Stalkers* in 1991?
I read/played those gamebooks from when they first came out and sent sample work to Puffin a few times with some encouraging feedback, but I suspect someone put in a good word for me!

What is your process for approaching one of the black and white illustrations for the *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks?
I keep a small sketchbook for playing with ideas. I'd read the briefs and start scribbling thumbnails of the overall design and bits of characters, details etcetera, then do a rough pencil sketch full size on layout paper. I use tracing paper to overdraw and refine the image till I'm happy with it then trace the outlines down on the actual paper. This time I'd pencil it in with some detail before starting to ink it in. The style I do my *Fighting Fantasy* illos in was largely inspired by the pulp and comic artists I admire: Virgil Finlay, Frank Kelly Freas, Brian Lewis, John Bolton. I use a small paintbrush and a couple of Rotring pens for the inking, starting with the large black areas and working to the finer details, trying to be as parsimonious as possible. The initial reason for this rather traditional style was that it printed well (using the printing methods of the time) though more modern printing methods are more adaptable and can better handle true tones, I did *Bloodbones* just the same to fit in with the older books.

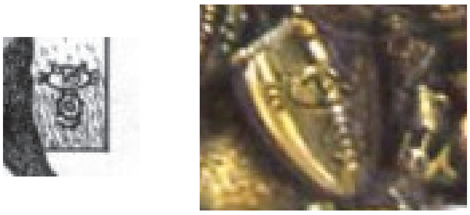
This is a more of a weirdly sci-fi adventure than the standard *Fighting Fantasy* sword and sorcery. What was you reaction to what was required given the "fantasy" tag of the range? Some of the pictures are clearly influenced by sci-fi classics like *Forbidden Planet* and *Doctor Who*. Was that a decision on your part, or a suggestion of the author's?
I knew Peter Darvill-Evans was a big *Doctor Who* fan and I like my fantasy diverse anyway. I loved the quirkiness of the story, and knew what he was getting at in the briefs. We obviously like a lot of the same things. So the Collector robot was obviously based on Robby from *Forbidden Planet*, designed by Robert Kinoshita and still pretty much my all-time favourite fantasy robot. There's a guy who makes replicas of Robby, fully seven foot tall. I'd just love one of those!

Do you have a favourite illustration from the book?
The brief that made me laugh the most was where I was asked to portray a huge panorama of a formal garden with paths and flowers and a fountain, with trees and a city in the background and two monstrous creatures lurking down two different paths., with everything, even the fountain water made entirely of crystal All this within an upright A5 rectangle and rendered in black ink on white paper with no true tone! All things considered I think I pulled it off okay.

Looking back now, is there anything that you would change?
There isn't an illustration I've done that I wouldn't like to change in some way!

BLACK ON BLACK — *NIGHT DRAGON*

How aware were you that the *Fighting Fantasy* range had only just survived ending in 1992 prior to *Night Dragon*?
I was a latecomer to the fold of published *Fighting Fantasy* artists anyway so I was glad to do a few more.



Above: A couple of examples of Tony's "cat cartouche" from the illustration for paragraph 126 of *Spectral Stalkers* and the cover of *Night Dragon* (1992) respectively.

What is the origin behind the small cat-like symbol that you sign your art with? And what do the numbers with them mean?
The cat cartouche has long formed part of my signature, often appearing instead of my name. Cats are a good luck symbol for me, and the winking face of the cat is a Capricorn symbol (my sun sign). The other bit is the date, though not always readable.

This time around you also provided the cover. How did that come about?

I caught the art editor on a good day! I took a sample painting to a *Fighting Fantasy* anniversary party at Puffin and showed it to him after a few sherries!

Are you happy with how it turned out? Would you do anything differently?

There were I couple I'd happily do over. The Red Wizard for starters! If they ever reprint it I'll insist! And there were a few in *Knights of Doom* I'd happily bin and redo, too.

Were you ever asked to provide art for other titles in the range, but had to pass on the opportunity?

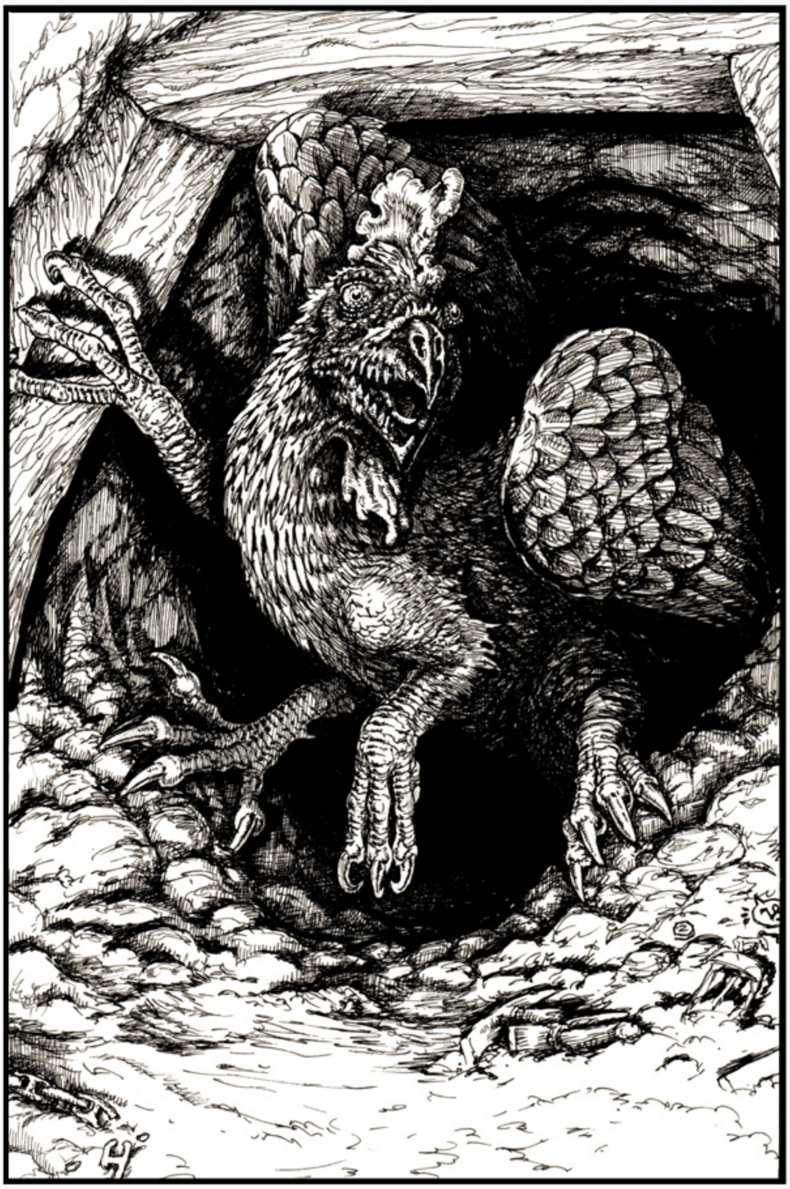
I came into it a bit late for that, but no, I would never turn down such a fun job!

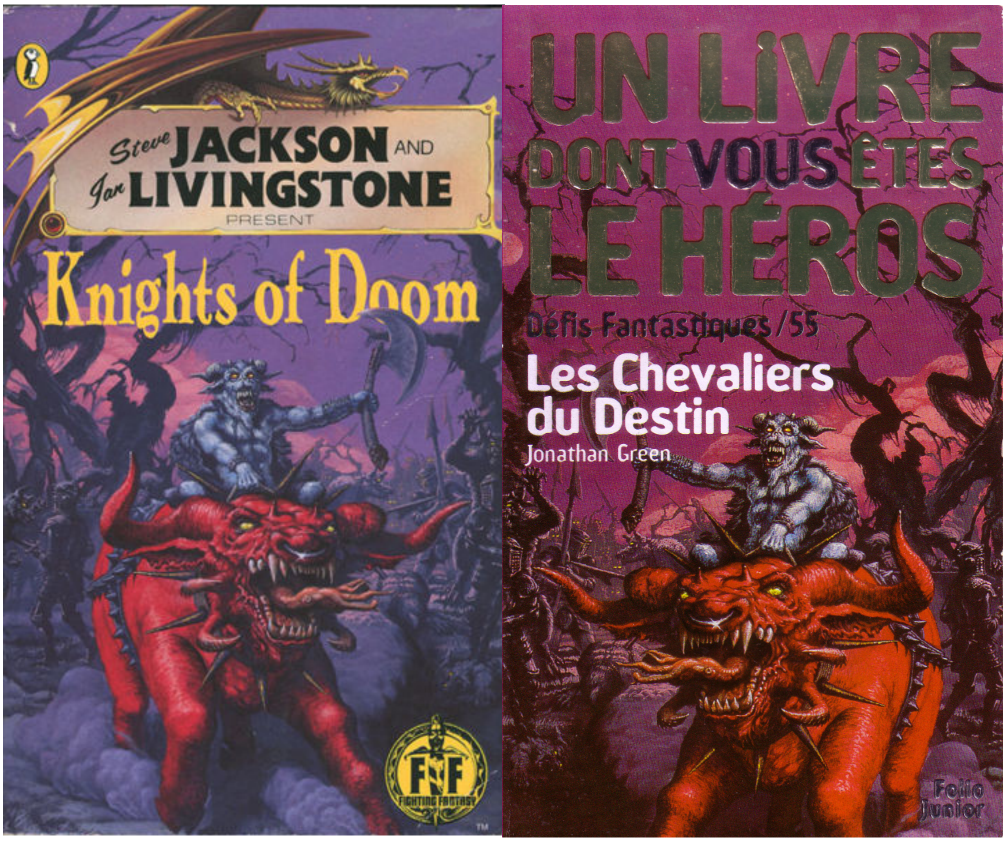
Many of your black and white internal illustrations go to great lengths to break the borders of your drawings. What is the reasoning behind this?

It's just a question of dynamics and I don't think I was the first to do it. A small upright rectangle is quite restrictive. But usually only the main character and things associated with it are allowed to escape out the rectangle. Foreground things crossing into the picture space remained as a white silhouette, which looks good (I nicked that idea from Syd Mead after all) and stops the picture getting overly cluttered. I kept more closely to this rule after *Night Dragon*, though.

What sort of materials do you use to accomplish your black and white art for these books?

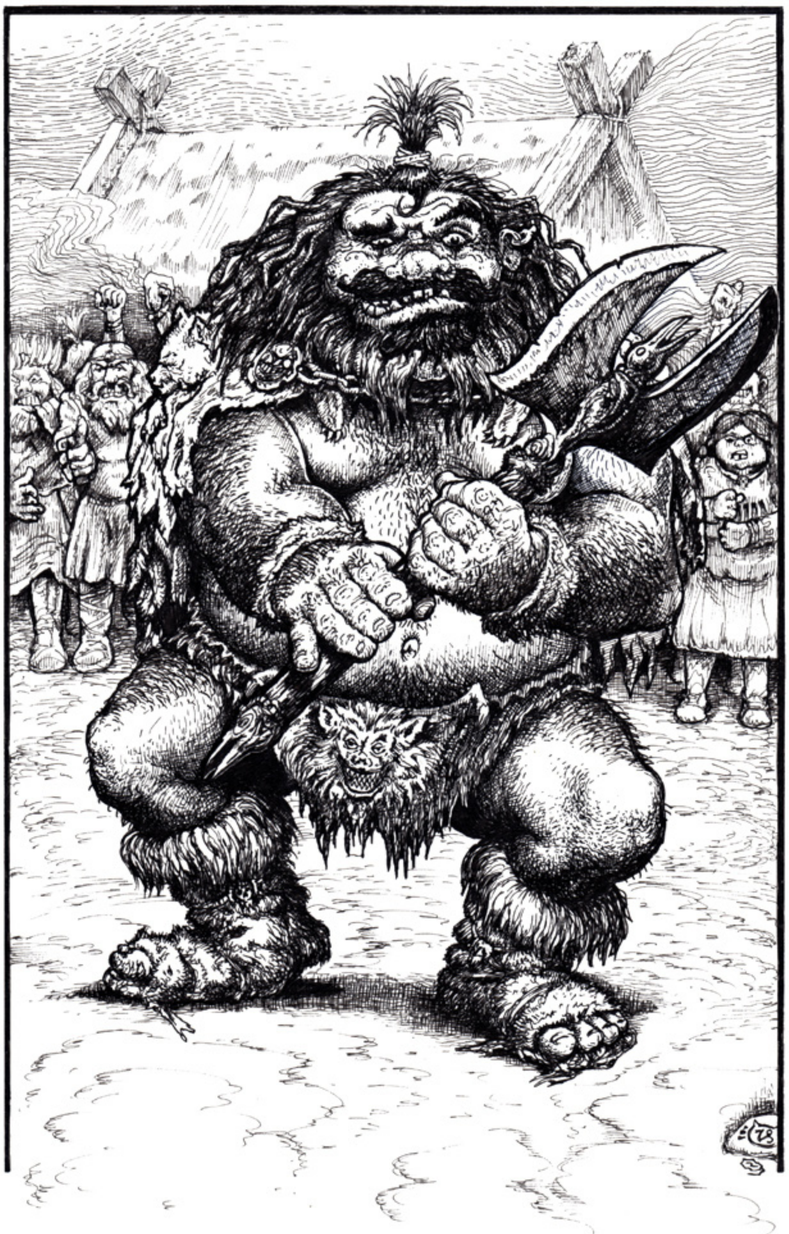
The finished art was done using Rotring pens on paper, to approximately A4 size. I used .25 and .35mm nibs mostly and .18mm (ridiculously thin) on *Spectral Stalkers*. The print size being what it was, I dropped the





Above (the Cockatrice that should have been a Basilisk at paragraph 317) and opposite page top (the Giant who was too comical at paragraph 204): Tony's unused art for Keith Martin's *Night Dragon*.
Below (left): The cover of *Knights of Doom* (1993) as it appeared in the UK edition and the flipped cover art of the French edition (1995).
Below (right): Draft art of Quezkari that would eventually become the art for paragraph 398 of *Bloodbones* (2006).

Art © Tony Hough, 2010. Used with permission.



smaller pen after *Spectral Stalkers*. Pen shading should be economical!

You've supplied some art that didn't make it into the final book. Can you explain the background to the pieces and as to why they failed to make the cut? Were they simply cut, or were they replaced by other new pieces?
I did have to redo a couple for *Night Dragon*. First was the champion of the Giants, who looked far too rotund and comical. The revised version was leaner, blonder and more fearsome, altogether better. The other was a Cockatrice but should have been a Basilisk! Some sources use these terms interchangeably but in other RPG's they have long been differentiated, so too in *Fighting Fantasy*!

COVERING NEW TERRITORY — *KNIGHTS OF DOOM*

Another cover. On some of the foreign editions, cover art has been flipped (for example the French version of *Knights of Doom*). Do you feel that this has an impact on how your art is viewed?
As a part of the development process I would often trace over and flip an image, or look in the mirror in order to see it "with fresh eyes" and if it doesn't look as good something's probably wrong! (It's even easier with digital work, of course) so no problem unless of course the image contains text or some other chiralic giveaway!

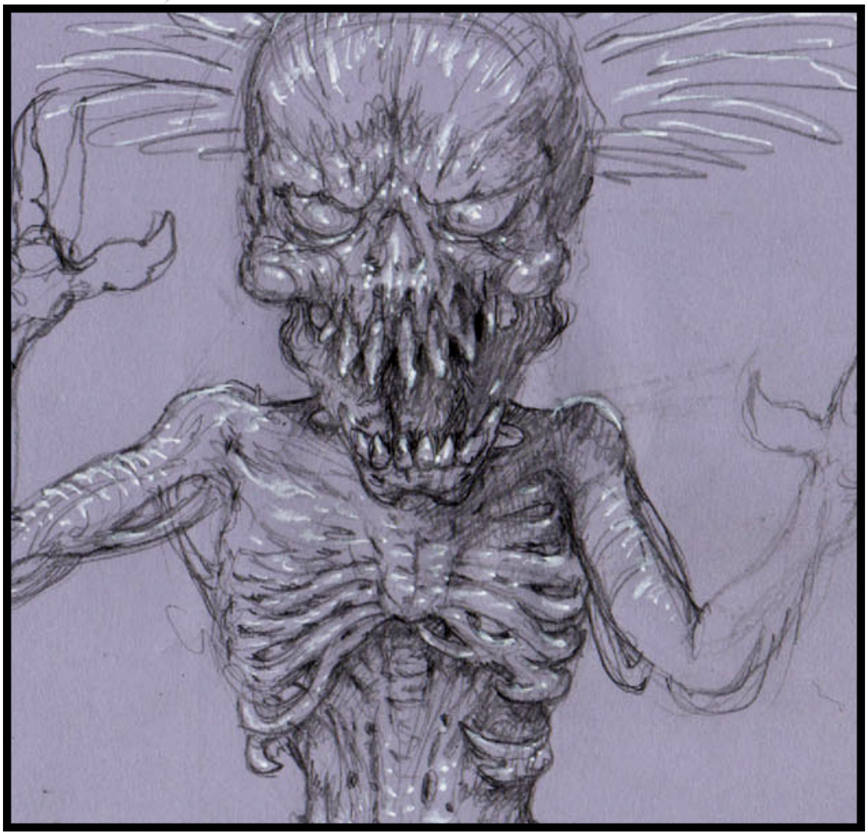
At paragraph 227 you have to incorporate a puzzle into your picture. Does this make the picture harder to illustrate?
Visual puzzles are exciting! Obviously the need for accuracy and clarity are extra important if the image contains a puzzle that must be solved to progress further, and Jon is very fond of visual puzzles it seems! The challenge is to achieve this but still make it look exciting as an illustration. In this case, the alchemical lab setting of the puzzle was great fun to draw. Plus I had great fun solving it myself!

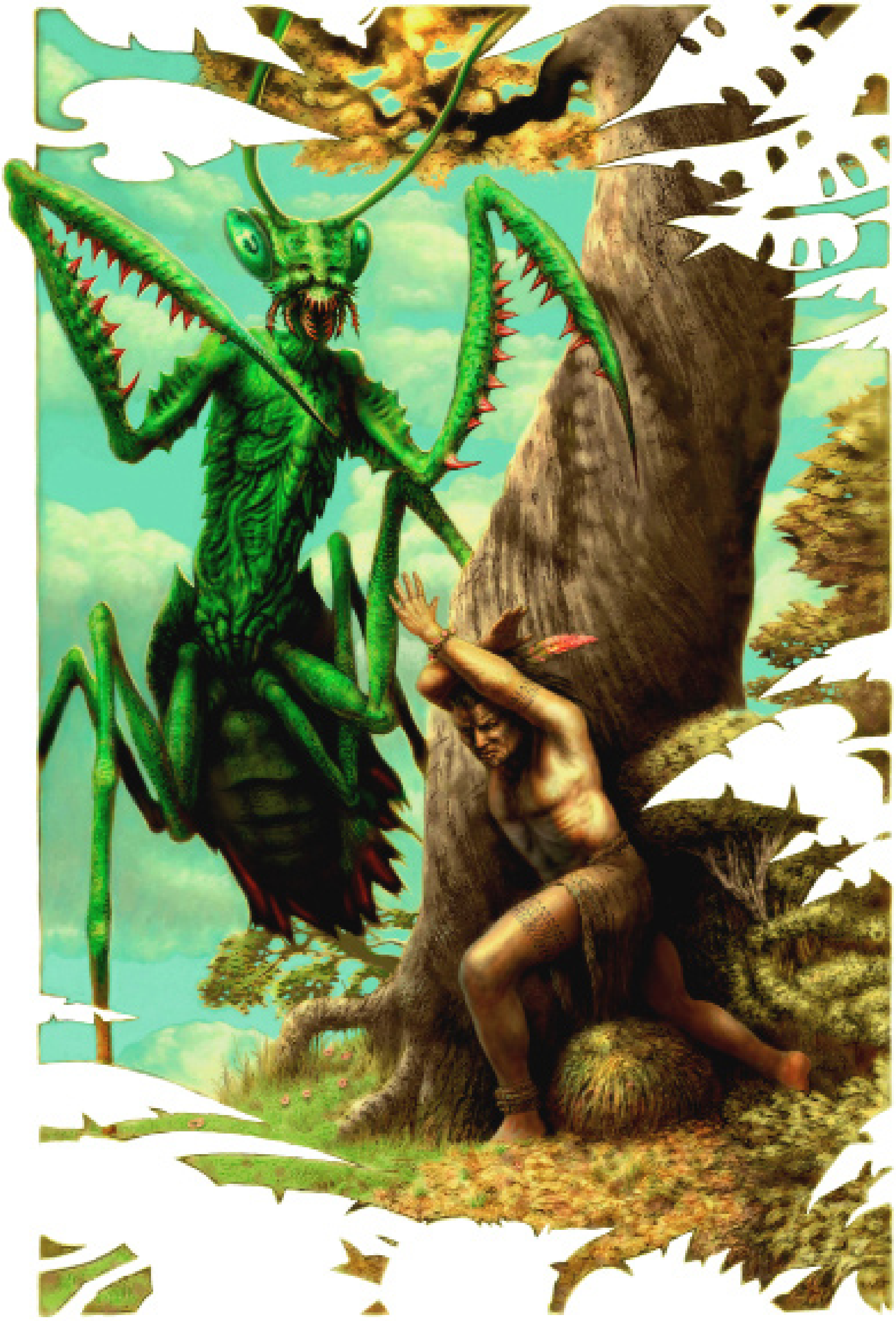
The writer Jonathan Green himself did the map for this book. Would providing maps be something you would like to have a go at in a future gamebook?
I love drawing maps!

What sort of schedule have you had for illustrating a *Fighting Fantasy* book? Have they proven challenging to meet?
The last one (*Bloodbones*) was done in thirty days, which isn't unusual. No challenge to a pro... I dealt with worse in my Games Workshop days!

STRANGE SHORES — *BLOODBONES*

What was it like coming back to the series after such a extended break?
Back to both the series and Jon Green, who wrote *Knights*





Left and opposite: In 2009 Tony digitally coloured some of his black and white *Bloodbones* art for display online. Featured here are the art for paragraphs 320 and 139 respectively.

Art © Tony Hough, 2010. Used with permission.

of Doom also, so doubly good! And the timing couldn't have been better for me as I had a big gap in my schedule at the time into which it fitted nicely! Despite changes in print methods since the old series which meant I could have used other techniques, I straight away decided to use the same materials and methods as the previous gamebooks.

Have you found the demands/expectations of the art different at Wizard? Can you get away with more gruesome depictions than under Puffin?
I always bear in mind the target audience; you can't go too far overboard, so no disembowelling, but the odd severed head is fine! Wizard had seen enough of my work to be sure of what they'd be getting, so we understood each other from the get-go. I think the only difference was a rather shorter deadline... still generous compared to when I worked for Games Workshop though!

Martin McKenna's Cinnabar on the cover of *Bloodbones* matches your internal illustration. Who got to design the undead pirate-lord?
As with my first gamebook *Spectral Stalkers*, the cover happened first. As it happens I've known and worked with Martin for many years (we were both *Warhammer* artists in the Eighties so I'm used to his style. We're around the same age and share many influences (John Bolton, Brian Lewis etcetera).

You've coloured in some of your *Bloodbones* art and posted it online. What was the driving force behind that?
Firstly wanting to play with Photoshop and my graphics tablet! Why should the fun have to stop when the project is "in the can" so to speak? Also, Jon is such a colourful writer. His vivid jungles, feather-clad savages etcetera needed to be seen in a way the restrictions of black and white can't entirely satisfy. There's more of those in the pipeline by the way...

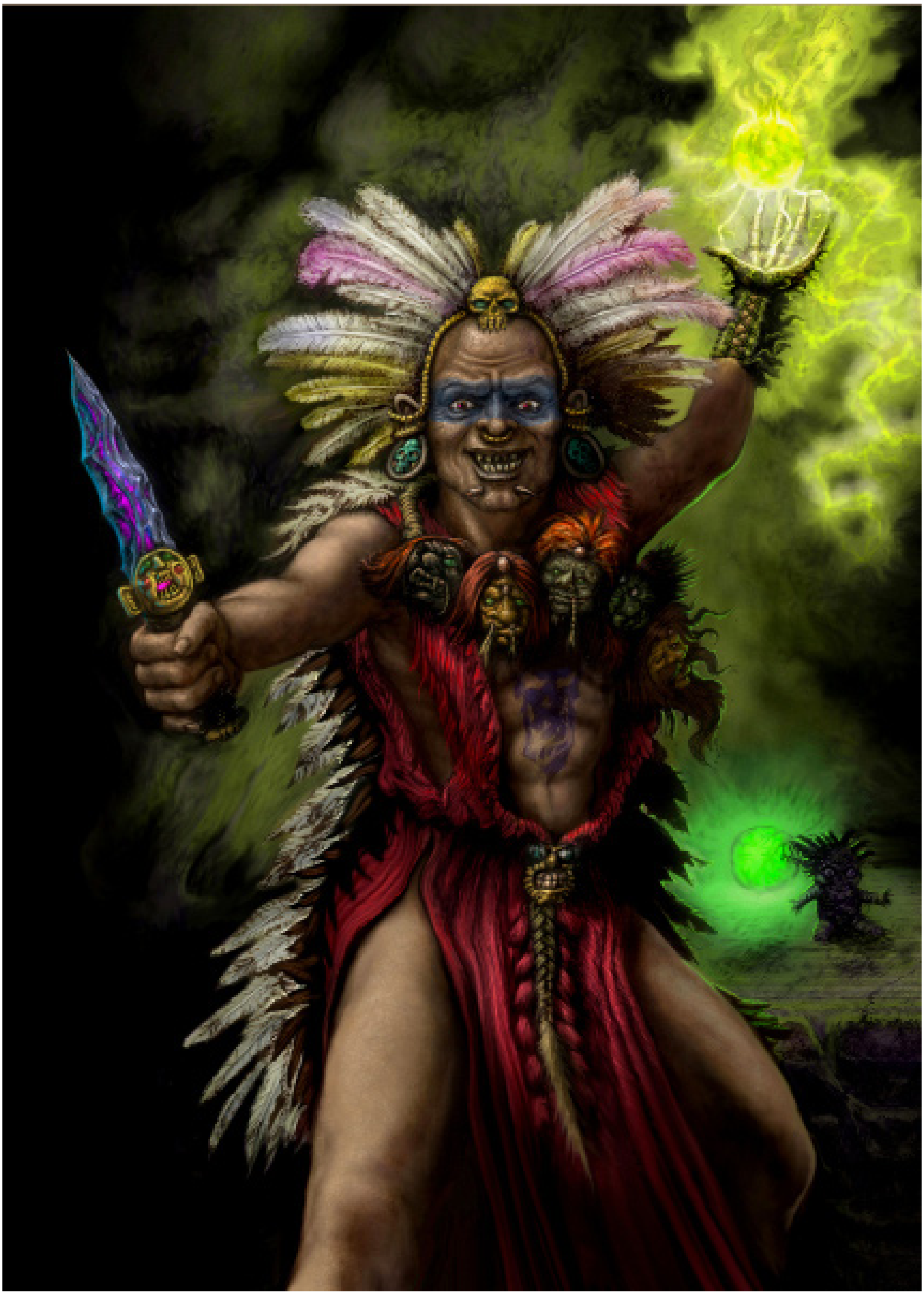
Would you like to have another shot at illustrating for the series?
I'm always up for a gamebook, I enjoy them way too much to turn one down.

AN ASSORTMENT OF GOODIES —
FRAGMENTS – THE FANTASY ART OF TONY HOUGH

What can you tell us about this forthcoming book?
Fragments is a small collection of my fantasy art which is published via the Blurb.com website.

What was the thinking behind publishing a collection of your art?

Since I was a child I collected art books by my favourite artists from Chris Foss to Patrick Woodroffe, Bruce Pennington to Jim Burns. I always wanted a Paper Tiger book of my own work. Well that's not about to happen so publishing my own via Blurb.com will do for now. My trial copy arrived the other day and it's come out just as good as I had hoped. Here's the link: www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/1413789.



Which piece of art in *Fragments* are you most pleased with?
I'm very pleased with the "New Regenerator" and also particularly the "CyberWolf". The digital painting looks pretty good I think. I tattooed the same wolf on someone's chest, too.

You had some of your art included in *Fantasy Art Now* art compilation edited by fellow *Fighting Fantasy* artist Martin McKenna. Which pieces were included and what are your feelings on such compilation art books?
The two pieces included in *Fantasy Art Now* were my "Byakhee" (see page 7) and a landscape called "After A Long Silence".

Compilation books like this are useful in their way, a good free advertisement, helping to get your name seen. You don't get paid but you're granting them no more copyright/license to the work than the appearance in the book so you are losing nothing either. I have in fact also contributed to *Sci-Fi Art Now* which Ilex will be releasing later this year (edited by John Freeman).

There are however some publishers who have the gall to ask artists to pay for the privilege of being included in their art books with the promise of a wide exposure. Stuff that!

What does the future hold for Tony Hough?
Well only time can tell! I might try a bit more writing. I think I've got a few good novels in me somewhere. I'm hoping to do some iPad apps and maybe some more books (this time via Amazon's Create Space). Guess I'll have to wait and see!

Once again, a big thank you to Tony Hough for agreeing to be interviewed in the first place. If you are interested in seeing more of Tony's art, then either purchase his newly published book Fragments*, or drop by his website at: www.tonyhough.co.uk/*

IN SEARCH OF THE MUNGIES' GOLD

by Warren McGuire[1]

Based on the board game by Steve Jackson[2]

Illustrated by Alexander Ballingall

INTRODUCTION

Before embarking on your adventure, you must first determine your own strengths and weaknesses. You use dice to determine your initial scores. On page 17 there is an *Adventure Sheet*, which you may use to record the details of your adventure. On it you will find boxes for recording the scores of your attributes. You are advised either to record your scores on the *Adventure Sheet* in pencil or to make photocopies of the sheet for use in future adventures.

Skill, Stamina and Luck

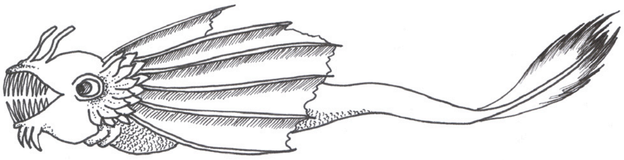
Roll one die. Add 6 to the number rolled and enter this total in the SKILL box on the *Adventure Sheet*.

Roll two dice. Add 12 to the number rolled and enter this total in the STAMINA box.

Roll one die. Add 6 to the number and enter this total in the LUCK box.

For reasons that will be explained below all your scores will change constantly during the adventure. You must keep an accurate record of these scores, and for this reason you are advised to write small in the boxes or to keep an eraser handy. But never rub out your *Initial* scores. Although you may be awarded additional SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK points, their totals may never exceed their *Initial* scores, except on those very rare occasions when the text specifically tells you so.

Your SKILL reflects your expertise in combat, your dexterity and agility. Your STAMINA score reflects how healthy and physically fit you are. Your LUCK score indicates how lucky you are.



Battles

During your adventure you will often encounter hostile creatures which will attack you, and you yourself may choose to draw your sword against an enemy you chance across. In some such situations you may be given special options allowing you to deal with the encounter in an unusual manner, but in most cases you will have to resolve battles as described below.

Enter your opponents skill and stamina scores on a spare sheet of paper. You should also make a note of any special abilities or instructions which are unique to that particular opponent. Then follow this sequence:

1. Roll both dice for your opponent. Add its SKILL score to the total rolled to find its Attack Strength.
2. Roll both dice for yourself, then add your current SKILL score to find your Attack Strength.
3. If your Attack Strength is higher than your opponent's, you have wounded it: proceed to step 4. If your opponent's Attack Strength is higher than yours, it has wounded you: proceed to step 5. If both Attack Strength totals are the same, you have avoided or parried each other's blows: start a new Attack Round from step 1 above.
4. You have wounded your opponent, so subtract 2 points from its STAMINA score. You may use luck here to do additional damage (see below).
5. Your opponent has wounded you, so subtract 2 points from your STAMINA score. You may use luck to reduce the loss of STAMINA (see below).
6. Begin the next Attack Round, starting again at step 1. This sequence continues until the STAMINA score of either you or your opponent reaches zero, which means death. If your opponent dies, you are free to continue with your adventure. If you die, your adventure ends and you must start all over again by creating a new character.

Escaping

On some pages you may be given the option of running away from a battle should things be going badly for you. However, if you do run away, your opponent automatically gets in one wound on you (subtract 2 STAMINA points) as you flee.

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[1] This adventure was written using the excellent ADVELH software (http://homepage.mac.com/siyanlis/Xhoromag/Advelh.htm). It is dedicated to Steve Jackson.

[2] Adapted with the permission of Steve Jackson and Wizard Books. Original board game published in *Warlock* (Issue 5, 1985).

Note that you may use luck on this wound in the normal way (see below). You may only *Escape* if that option is specifically given to you on the page.

Fighting More Than One Opponent

In some situations you may find yourself facing more than one person or creature in combat. Sometimes you will treat them as a single opponent; sometimes you will be able to fight each in turn; and at other times you will have to fight them all at the same time! If they are treated as a single opponent, the combat is resolved normally. For combat where you must fight them at the same time, roll one die for yourself and one for each of your opponents. Any with a lower Attack Strength than you fail to do you any damage. Any with a higher Attack Strength than you do you normal damage. Before each round you must choose which opponent you are attacking – if you have a higher Attack Strength than that opponent, you cause damage to them but not to any other opponent.

Luck

At various times during your adventure, either in battles or when you come across other situations in which you could be either Lucky or Unlucky (details of these are given in the relevant paragraphs), you may use LUCK to make the outcome more favourable to you. But beware! Using LUCK is a risky business and, if you are Unlucky, the results could be disastrous.

The procedure for *Testing your Luck* works as follows: roll two dice. If the number rolled is equal to or less than your current LUCK score, you have been Lucky and the outcome will be in your favour. If the number rolled is higher than your current LUCK score, you have been Unlucky and will be penalized.

Each time you *Test your Luck*, you must subtract 1 point from your current LUCK score. Thus you will soon realize that, the more you rely on your LUCK, the more risky this procedure will become.

Using Luck in Battles

In certain paragraphs you will be told to *Test your Luck*, and you will then find out the consequences of being Lucky or Unlucky. However, in battles, you always have the option of using your luck, either to inflict more serious damage on an opponent you have just wounded, or to minimize the effects of a wound you have just received.

If you have just wounded an opponent, you may *Test your Luck* as described above. If you are Lucky you have inflicted a severe wound; deduct an extra 2 points from your opponent's STAMINA score. If you are Unlucky, however, your blow

IN SEARCH OF THE MUNGIES' GOLD
ADVENTURE SHEET

SKILL = **INITIAL SKILL =**	**STAMINA =** **INITIAL STAMINA =**	**LUCK =** **INITIAL LUCK =**	**GOLD**	**PROVISIONS REMAINING**	**DISTURBANCE**

EQUIPMENT

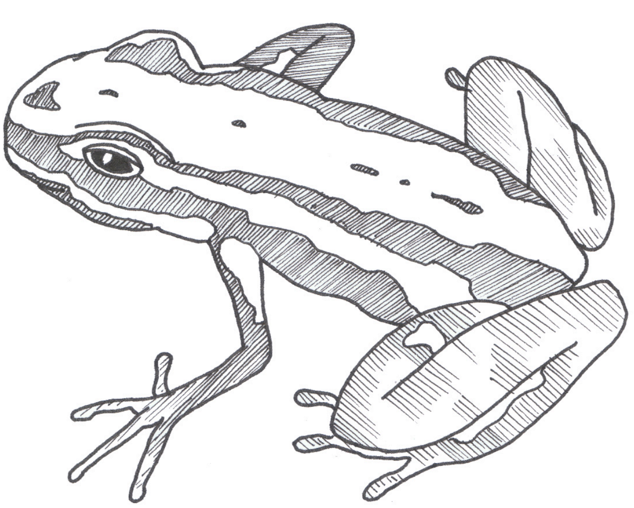
SPECIAL SKILLS	
AIM	
CLIMB	
DEFTNESS	
JUMP	
OBSERVATION	
RUN	
SNEAK	
SWIM	

NOTES

only scratches your opponent; and you deduct only 1 point from your opponent's STAMINA (i.e., instead of scoring the normal 2 points of damage, you now score only 1).

Whenever you yourself are wounded in combat, you may *Test your Luck* to try to minimize the wound. If you are Lucky, your opponent's blow only grazes you; deduct only 1 point from your STAMINA. If you are Unlucky, your wound is a serious one and you must deduct 1 extra STAMINA point (i.e., deduct a total of 3 points from your own STAMINA).

Remember: you must subtract 1 point from your LUCK score each time you *Test your Luck*.

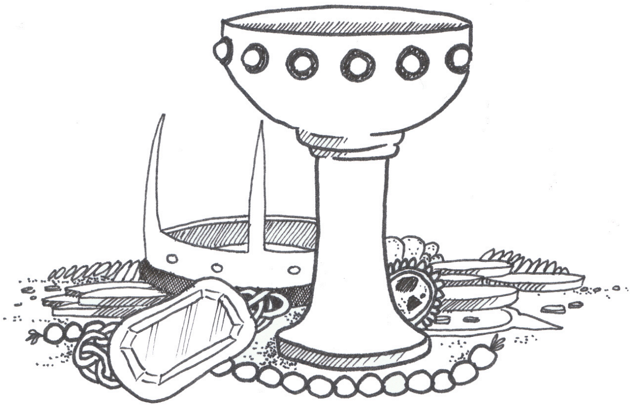


Disturbance

Your DISTURBANCE score is a measure of how much attention you have drawn to yourself in your adventure – whether through noise, scent, or sight. Your DISTURBANCE starts at 0 but will increase through the adventure (as you proceed you will learn the kinds of factors which influence it). On some occasions you will be asked to *Test your Disturbance*. You do this by rolling 2 dice. If the result is more than your DISTURBANCE score, you have not attracted unwelcome attention to yourself, and proceed as normal. If you roll equal to or less than your DISTURBANCE score, you have drawn the unwelcome attention of some denizen of the forests. If this happens, you must, unless other wise instructed, roll two dice, and refer to the following Encounter Table to see what happens. Follow the instructions given in the table – you may only proceed in your adventure if you survive the encounter, but, unless otherwise stated, you must add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score because of the racket caused by the fight (in addition to any further additions noted below).

Roll	**Encounter**
2	A large, angry and, unfortunately for you, rabid GREAT APE (SKILL 8, STAMINA 11) crashes out of the undergrowth and attacks you. If it inflicts any wounds on you, *Test your Luck* after the fight has ended. If you are Lucky, you have not been infected by rabies. If you are Unlucky, you have been infected. You soon begin to froth at the mouth and become deranged (effectively ending your adventure).
3	A GIANT FOREST SPIDER (SKILL 7, STAMINA 6) drops down from the canopy and attempt to make a meal out of you. The Spider has a poisonous bite – every injury it causes reduces your STAMINA by 3 points.
4	You have strayed within the reach of a knot of STRANGLE WEED (SKILL 8, STAMINA 10), which attempts to entangle you and feed on your juices. The first time the Strangle Weed manages to score a hit on you, it wraps itself around you and does an extra point of damage each round, whether it wins or loses, until one of you is dead.
5	GIANT LEECHES (SKILL 6, STAMINA 7, fight them as one opponent) attempt to latch themselves onto you and suck your blood. For every wound they inflict on you, you lose only 1 STAMINA point as one attaches itself and starts sucking. Once the fight is over, you can easily dispatch them with your weapon, assuming you have one. If you are unarmed, you must lose an extra STAMINA point per injury received as you have to pull them off or wait until they have drunk their fill and drop off. As they inject anticoagulant into your blood, the wounds will continue weeping for some time – you must add an extra point to your DISTURBANCE score if you receive an injury from them as other creatures will be drawn to the smell of your blood.
6	You have disturbed two GIANT BATS (each with SKILL 5, STAMINA 6). Each attack round only one attacks you, and they attack you in alternate attack rounds as they swoop down at you.
7	A troop of ENRAGED MONKEYS takes offence at your presence in the forest and attacks. Each Monkey has a SKILL of 4 and a STAMINA of 2. Roll two dice to see how many attack, and fight them all at the same time – because of their small size, they each only inflict 1 STAMINA point of damage per injury.
8	A SCREECH-OWL (SKILL 7, STAMINA 5) swoops at you and attempts to tear out your eyes. Because its first swoop is silent, you automatically lose 2 STAMINA points before the fight starts as it rakes your skull with its vicious talons.
9	You bump into a pair of FOREST GOBLINS (SKILL 5, STAMINA 5), who attack you at the same time. Once you have killed one, the other will flee, running into the jungle shrieking (add an extra point to your DISTURBANCE score).
10	A GIANT SNAKE (SKILL 7, STAMINA 8) strikes at you from the overhanging branches. The first time the Snake manages to score two hits on you in succession, it wraps itself around you and does an extra point of damage each round, whether it wins or loses, until one of you is dead.
11	A shaggy MOSS BEAR (SKILL 9, STAMINA 8) rears up from the tangled mulch and litter on the forest floor, angry at the disturbance. If you have any provisions, you can *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, it will be distracted by food you throw at it and you can escape without a fight (you do not need to add any points to your DISTURBANCE score in this case). If you are Unlucky, have no provisions, or are unwilling to part with them, you must fight it.
12	A vicious WEREWOLF (SKILL 8, STAMINA 9) comes tearing out of the bush and attacks you. If it inflicts any wounds on you, *Test your Luck* after the fight has ended. If you are Lucky, you have not been infected by lycan-

thropy. If you are Unlucky, you have been infected. You soon begin to snarl and twist in lupine agony as the lycanthropy sets in (effectively ending your adventure).



Special Skills

At the start of your adventure, you must choose three Special Skill from the following list:

- *Aim*: you are particularly good at throwing and firing things at a target.
- *Climb*: you are an expert climber, of trees, buildings, rock-faces, etc.
- *Deftness*: you are extremely deft with your hands, capable of complex and fiddly manipulation.
- *Jump*: you are a first rate jumper, both horizontally and vertically.
- *Observation*: you are particularly keyed in to your environment, noticing details and signs which others might miss.
- *Run*: you are capable of running faster and longer than most people.
- *Sneak*: you can be very unobtrusive and light on your feet when you want to be, allowing you to move with less chance of drawing attention to yourself. Any time your are told to *Test your Disturbance*, you should first test your SKILL if you have Sneak Special Skill. If you succeed, you can add 1 to the DISTURBANCE dice roll (since sneaking successfully makes you less likely to be found by other creatures). If you fail, *Test your Disturbance* as normal.
- *Swim*: you are a strong swimmer, in still or running water, and can hold your breath longer than most other people.

Special Skills work by giving you an advantage (usually in the form of a positive or missing negative modifier) in relevant situations when you must *Test your Skill* (see Testing your Skill for details). Not all Special Skills will be equally useful to you, and some routes may require a different Special Skill set than others.

More About Your Attributes

Skill

Your SKILL score will not change much during the course of your adventure. Occasionally, a paragraph may give instructions to increase or decrease your SKILL score, but it may not exceed its *Initial* value unless you are specifically instructed to the contrary.

At various times during your adventure, you will be told to *Test your Skill*. The procedure for this is exactly the same as that for *Testing your Luck*: roll two dice and compare to your SKILL score. If you roll equal to or less than your current SKILL, you have succeeded. If you roll higher, you have failed. *However*, *Test your Skill* rolls are often subject to modifiers, depending on the Special Skills you have. It works like this: you will be asked to *Test your Skill*, at (for example) -1 unless you have the *Jump* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. This means that you must deduct 1 point from your SKILL for the purposes of this roll if you do not have *Jump* Special Skill, but if you do have *Jump*, you can add 1 to your SKILL for this roll instead. Remember: minus modifiers are bad, positive modifiers are good!

Stamina

Your STAMINA score will change a lot during your adventure. It will drop as a result of wounds gained through combat, or by falling foul of traps and pitfalls, and it will also drop after you perform any particularly arduous task. If your STAMINA score ever falls to zero, you have been killed and should stop reading the book immediately. Brave adventurers who wish to pursue their quest must roll up a new character and start all over again.

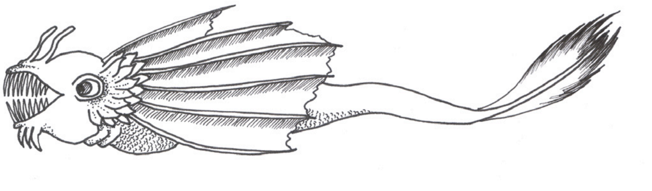
You can restore lost STAMINA by eating meals or Provisions. You start the game without any Provisions, but during your adventure you will be able to obtain meals. You must keep track of how many meals worth of Provisions you have left by filling in the details in the Provisions box of your *Adventure Sheet*. Each time you eat a meal you may restore up to 4 points of STAMINA, but you must remember to deduct 1 meal from your Provisions box. You may stop and eat Provisions at any time except when you are engaged in a battle.

Luck

Additions to your LUCK score may be awarded in the adventure when you have been particularly lucky or created your own luck by some action. Details are given, where appropriate, in the paragraphs of the book. Remember that, as with SKILL and STAMINA, your LUCK score may never exceed its *Initial* value.

Equipment and Gold

You begin your adventure with a sword, wearing leather armour and carrying a backpack to hold any Provisions or Gold Pieces that you acquire.



BACKGROUND

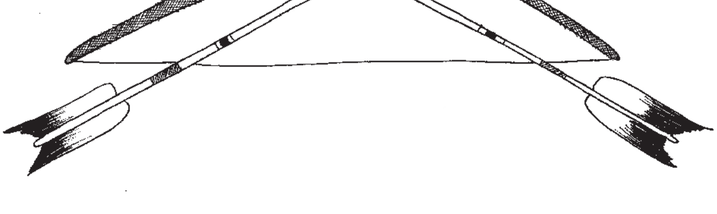
These are fevered times in Kharé...

A wonderful new delicacy has been discovered in Lake Lumlé – the Mutton Fish. Those who have eaten its flesh are rumoured to have lost interest in all other food, wanting only to indulge in the delights of this fabulous feast. Mutton Fish are fetching extraordinary prices, and have become worth more than their weight in gold. Well beyond the means of the common people maybe, but there is always someone willing to pay.

Suddenly everyone is trying to catch one of these mighty specimens and make his fortune. In an apparent bid to stop the city descending into chaos, Garin Alderay, leader of the Merchants' Guild, suggested that fishing in Lake Lumlé should be by license only. Issued by the Merchants' Guild of course. Riots immediately erupted in the docklands, and these have inevitably spread to the Red-Eye ghettoes in the northern half of the city, always a hotbed of trouble and disorder. The Nobles of Kharé seem more incapable than ever of governing the city, and some have suggested that this is precisely what Alderay wants as he tightens his Guild's grip on the Mutton Fish trade and establishes himself as a leading power in the city. Indeed, the boat of the roguish First Noble of Kharé, Lord Sansas, has been spotted leaving the city for Lake Lumlé, whether in search of Mutton Fish or to escape Alderay's assassins is anyone's guess.

To make matters worse, a rumour has swept through the city that the Archmage has stolen the legendary Crown of Kings from Analand and has declared himself ruler of Kakhabad. Most of the inhabitants of Kharé had never even heard of the Archmage before this news, and those who had considered him to be nothing more than a second-rate sorcerer with delusions of grandeur. This, coupled with the possibility of imminent invasion from Analand, has only heightened tensions in the city.

And so you find yourself back in Kharé, drawn by the chances of fame and fortune which seem to be there for the taking in these troubled times. On a wet, dark evening you take shelter from the elements and the night curfew in The Wayfarer's Rest on the banks of the great Jabaji River. As you sit listening to the regulars and travellers in the common room, you hear many a strange tale, but none more strange or intriguing as the legend of the Mungies' Gold.



The Legend of the Mungies' Gold

Nobody knows when the story was first told of the Mungies' Gold. Mungies are a kind of mild-mannered ape found in the forests of western Kakhabad and neighbouring Mauristatia. It's likely they would never have drawn attention to themselves if it wasn't for their penchant for gold. The creatures are so attracted to this precious metal that they will steal it at every opportunity they can. This they can do with considerable ease, as they are extremely nimble, climbing through windows or reaching into purses to get hold of the object of their desire.

Why the Mungies are so attracted to gold is anyone's guess, and what they do with the gold they have pilfered is just as much of a mystery. Many a story was told of how they have piled up their treasure in a fantastic hoard, somewhere in the jungles, hills, or desolate wastes of Kakhabad. Then the enterprising Jan van Harack, the famed adventurer from Brice, set out with a band of warriors for the far side of Lake Lumlé, where the Mungies are found in greatest numbers, to explore the uncharted cloud forests and jungles at the foothills of the Cloudcap Mountains. These lands are feared by the residents of Kharé and the fishermen on the lake, and they are said to be inhabited by all manner of fell creature and evil spirit. Nothing was heard of van Harack for many weeks, but then one day a small boat sailed into the Lumlé Gate in Kharé, with van Harack and two of his band of warriors half dead inside. They had failed in their mission to return with the Mungies' Gold, but they reported that they had caught sight of vast riches deep in the forests, under the shadows of the Cloudcap Mountains in a place named Gandaki. Just as the Gold was within their grasp, the Mungies and other apes of the forests descended in fury on them, killing many of their band. As the survivors fled, they were picked off by the predators of the jungle, until only van Harack and his two companions were left to tell the tale. Unfortunately, all three of them died from jungle fever within a week of returning, so nothing more was learnt of the location of the Mungies Gold. The residents of Kharé didn't know what to make of this. Did van Harack really find the Mungies' Gold, or was it a story told to cover for his failure? Since his return, many adventurers have attempted to find Gandaki and the Mungies' Gold, but none have returned to tell the tale. The jungles of western Kakhabad remain as uncharted as ever, and the steadier souls of Kharé have dismissed the Mungies' Gold as a myth and a fool's hope.

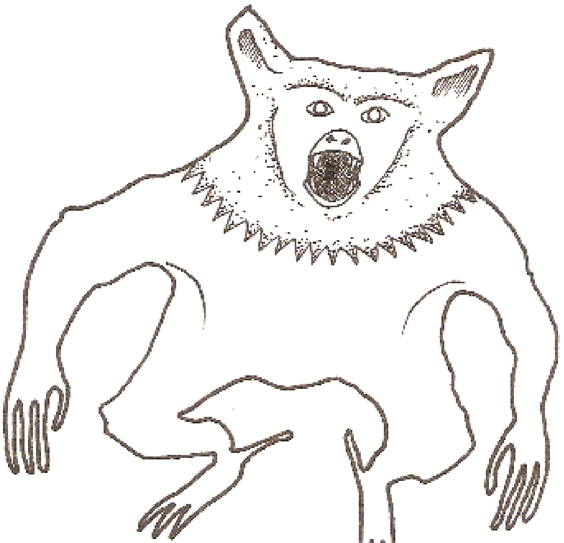
Maybe you are a fool, but the lure of the Mungies' Gold is not something to be dismissed so lightly. Having bid your fellow revellers good evening, you spend the night tossing and turning in your bed, unable to shake the thought of untold riches in the jungle, waiting for the brave to find them. First thing in the morning you visit an old friend of yours, a fisherman called Jilani, who has ferried you around these lands on many an occasion. If anyone would be willing to take you across Lake Lumlé, it would be Jilani. You find him, as you usually do, mending his nets behind the docks at the western end of the city, where the wide Lumlé Gate looks out towards the great lake and the wild lands of Mauristatia beyond. You buy Jilani a drink in one of the dockside taverns, and tell him what is on your mind.

“The Mungies’ Gold, eh?” he says. “Now there’s a thing. Of course you know it might not exist at all?”

“Ah, but we’ll never know for sure if no-one looks for it,” you tell him. You ask him whether he’d be willing to take you to the far shore of Lake Lumlé and wait while you search the cloud forests for Gandaki and the hidden gold.

“How much are you offering?” he asks, a glint in his eye. As you have only 60 gold pieces to your name, you offer him half of it and promise to give him half of what you find in the jungle when you return (add the remaining 30 gold pieces to your adventure sheet). You both leave unsaid what will happen if you return empty handed or not at all. Jilani spits on his hand and you shake on the deal, agreeing to meet again on the docks in two hours’ time. Then he races off to make arrangements, leaving you free to wander the street of Kharé and ponder the wisdom of your plans...

Turn to paragraph **1**.



1

Before you meet Jilani at the docks, you have time to go to one of Kharé’s many markets. If you wish to visit one near the docks, turn to **180**. If you wish to go straight to the docks to meet Jilani, turn to **146**.

2

The Woodsman calms down and says that you are welcome to join him for a chat and a bite to eat if you leave your weapons outside his cabin. This seems like a reasonable request, so you comply. He offers you some food (gain 4 STAMINA points) and inquires about your travels. You are not sure what you should tell him. Do you want to ask him about the dangers of the forest (turn to **81**), or enquire about the location of the Mungies’ Gold (turn to **67**)?

3

At the mention of Kharé, the sage hums and haws, and he seems keen to resume his examination of the environment around him. Do you want to attack him (turn to **126**), or leave him and continue on your journey (turn to **18**)?

4

As you approach the Skunkbear, it growls deeply, then rears up on its front legs, raising its rear end in the air. It squirts a vile ordure against the tree trunk, and the air is filled with a nauseating smell. You can fire an arrow at it if you wish. It then attacks you, and you must fight (-1 to your Attack Strength due to the unbearable scent of your opponent):

SKUNKBEAR SKILL 7 STAMINA 5

If you win, add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score. You may take one of the Skunkbear’s paws as a trophy – you have seen these sold by apothecaries in Kharé and it may be of value to someone. You can also gather three undamaged Jubalani fruit – each counts as one meal. Now will you continue along the path (turn to **129**), or attempt to remove the Skunkbear’s scent gland, as you have heard that these are highly sought after and fetch high prices (turn to **43**)?

5

With a mighty effort, you clear the ravine, just. You crash onto the far bank, grabbing at the knots of roots in front of you to stop yourself from falling back in. Add 1 to your LUCK. Pausing to take a breath, you see that there is nothing for it but to plunge ahead into the overgrown depths in front of you. As you are about to do so, the moon begins to rise above the forest, casting an eerie light over you and the land around you. *Test your Disturbance*. If you fail, roll on the Encounter Table and follow the instructions given. If you succeed, or if you survive the encounter, you carry on as fast as you can through the forest, which is becoming increasingly dense and unyielding. Will you turn right, towards an area of hanging lianas (turn to **161**), or left, towards a rocky outcrop (turn to **181**)?

6

You climb carefully from your bed of moss and peer over one of the tree trunks to see what is making the noise. At first you don’t see anything, but then you notice a small dark something moving towards you. Suddenly a pair of eyes look up at you, followed almost instantly by the loudest and most terrifying scream you have ever heard! You almost jump out of your skin as the JIB-JIB (for that is what it is) throws its head back and lets loose with its almighty cry of alarm, before racing off into the undergrowth (add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score). Its cry echoes around the forest, causing an uproar of bird cries and shrieks from other creatures of the canopy. Somewhere nearby a deep growl rumbles through the night. It looks like you might be wise to get out of the area as quickly as possible – so much for getting some sleep in the jungle! Turn to **151**.

7

Attempting to skewer an angry Manticore which is trying to shake you off its back whilst beating its wings and jabbing at you with its sting is not the kind of situation you find yourself in everyday! *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Aim* or *Deftness* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you fail, the Manticore swipes at you with its sting, and strikes you on the shoulder (lose 1 SKILL point and 1 die of STAMINA points). Turn to **163**. If you succeed, you manage to stab the Manticore in the back! Roll 1 die.

If you roll 1-2, you have inflicted a flesh wound on the Manticore (if you end up fighting it, deduct 1 SKILL and 3 STAMINA points from the statistics given). Add 1 to your LUCK score. The Manticore roars and writhes beneath you – turn to **163**.

If you roll 3-4, you have severed its spine at the base of its tail, which instantly flops uselessly to the ground. If you end up fighting the Manticore, deduct 3 SKILL points and 5 STAMINA points from the statistics given for it, and ignore the instructions given for dealing with attacks from its sting. Add 2 to your LUCK score. The Manticore roars and writhes beneath you – turn to **163**.

If you roll 5-6, turn to **61**.

8

"'Tis a dangerous place, dangerous indeed. You'll need to keep your wits about you if you want to survive here. Snakes! There's a thing to watch out for. And no doubt the Apes will be after you before too long. Make as little disturbance as you can and maybe they'll leave you alone. Ah, and the Shield Maidens, avoid them like the plague! They'll not tolerate the likes of you in these lands, and once they get their hands on you, oh ho, you'll be as good as dead. They leave me alone 'cause I'm too old to be of use to them. Hey hey! And there's worse too, way up in the high country, up at the source of the Gaggagi River, where the Mungies are said to hoard their gold." The old man suddenly stops himself. He mutters under his breath and bustles around the chamber. It looks like it is time for you to leave. You retrace you steps to the junction in the trail and take the other fork. Turn to **121**.

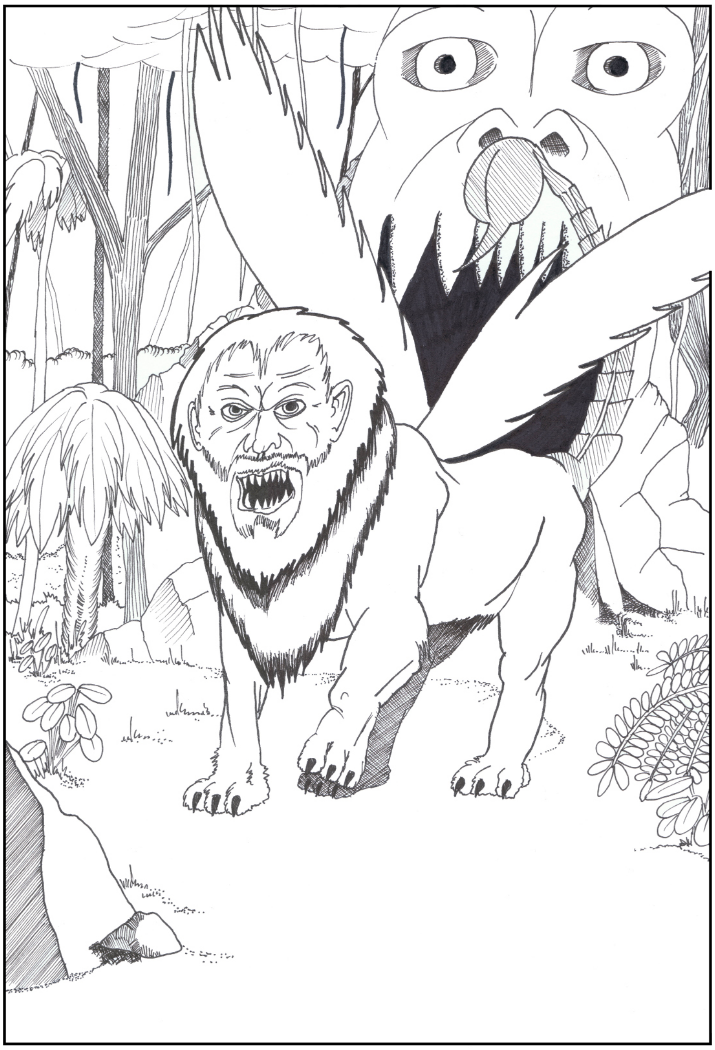
9

And suddenly you see it. You emerge from the forest and are confronted with a view that you will never forget – a cave mouth, carved in the shape of an ape's head fixed in an eternal scream. In its open maw, the entrance to the cave, lies a heap of gold, twinkling in the late afternoon sun. Piles of coins, goblets, bracelets, torques, statuettes and countless other treasures lie before you – the Mungies' Gold is there for the taking!

Overcome with anticipation, you stride towards the cave mouth. But as you approach, you hear a deep, spine-chilling growl from the depths of the cave. Before you have time to react, a huge MANTICORE emerges from within and, with a roar which terrifies you to the core (deduct 1 from your SKILL), it stands astride the gold. It casts its horribly human eyes around, searching for the one who has disturbed its shrine, and, with dread intent, its gaze settles on YOU! With a snarl, it prepares to attack. Do you attack it (turn to **76**), or run for the nearest tree in the hope of climbing out of harm's way (turn to **48**)?

10

Jilani directs his boat away from the figures and soon you are out of reach of their cries. The wind turns in your favour and the boat races towards Kharé and safety. As evening falls, you spot the cityport in the distance, its miasma dark against the sky and its purple limestone walls turned red by the setting sun. You have survived your search for the Mungies' Gold, but you have returned empty handed. Maybe one day you will get your revenge on Sansas, but for now you are thankful to have got away with your life.



11

Now that you are up among the branches, you must try and spot one of the little frogs among the bromeliads, rotting leaves, and mosses which cluster in the joints of the tree. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Observation* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, you have managed to spot one of the frogs (turn to **82**). If you fail, you cannot see one of the frogs for all your looking. You can either return to the Witch to tell her that you have failed (turn to **138**), or continue on your journey (turn to **160**).

12

The trail leads you downhill, into a thickly forested valley. As you walk along the path, you are surrounded by a swarm of biting flies (lose 1 STAMINA point). You wave your arms around and quicken your pace, leaving them behind. *Test your Disturbance*. If you fail, roll on the Encounter Table and follow the instructions given. If you do not fail the roll, or if you survive the encounter, you carry on along the trail, which, after a few miles, forks. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Observation* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, turn to **38**. If you fail, do you wish to take the right-hand fork (turn to **93**) or the left-hand one (turn to **55**)?

13

Suddenly you are struck from above with a vicious edged weapon. Lose 2 STAMINA points. You have been set upon by a Wraith Ape, which has glided down from the canopy above, wielding a deadly Blade Tree leave as a weapon. You must fight it, with your Attack Strength reduced by 2 because of the dark (Wraith Apes have excellent night vision).

WRAITH APE	SKILL 8	STAMINA 7

If you win, *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **52**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **30**.

14

The twisting path leads into thick broad-leaf forest, where the air is hot and heavy and the light is muted. Creepers and trailing plants hang from the moss-covered boughs, and birds cry and insects buzz in the canopy above. The path wends its way through the undergrowth, descending gently to a small river which is crossed by an ancient, crumbling stone bridge. It continues on the other side, climbing slowly and twisting and turning around the gnarled trunks of ancient trees. As you approach one particularly contorted old tree, you see that it is covered in large, spiky, yellow pods, and a number of these have fallen to the ground beneath it. It is a Jubalani Tree, and its fruit are a rare delicacy! Some of the fruit have been broken open, whether by the fall or by the attentions of some scavenger you are not sure, revealing soft pulp around big brown seeds. Do you want to stop to collect some fruit (turn to **108**), or pass by the Jubalani Tree and press on (Turn to **129**)?

15

Trying not to fumble at this crucial moment, you draw your bow and select an arrow. Do you have the Witch's poison? If so, you can apply it to the arrowhead (you only have enough for one arrow) if you have not already. Remember to *Test your Skill* to avoid poisoning yourself.

Now you must try to hit the Manticore. Although it is a large target, it is prowling around in a rage, so your aim will need to be good. *Test your Skill*, at -1, unless you have *Aim* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, turn to **150**. If you fail, your arrow whistles through the feathers in the Manticore's wing, and strikes the ground. Now you must decide what to do. Will you wait in the tree to see what happens (turn to **103**), attempt to jump onto the Manticore's back (turn to **42**), climb down from the tree to attack the Manticore (turn to **76**), or fire another arrow (turn to **115**)?

16

The Madman, weakened by your blows, staggers away from you, moaning and gasping as he does. All of a sudden he looks up at you and shrieks "Apes! Apes! Apes! Aaaaaggggghhhhh!" before running to the lakeside and becoming stuck up to the waist in the mire. He continues shrieking (add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score) for some time before beginning to weep quietly to himself. There doesn't seem to be much you can do to help the wretch, so you leave him to his fate and head for the forest. Turn to **140**.

17

Now that you have the frog, do you want to return with it to the Witch's hut (turn to **149**), or do you want to keep it for yourself, and carry on with your search for the Mungies' Gold (turn to **160**)?

18

As you walk along the trail, you hear a clash of weapons and screams to the left. Do you wish to investigate (turn to **54**) or do you wish to continue on (turn to **142**).

19

Raising your arms to ward off further blows with the stick, you tell the old man you mean him no harm. Despite this, he gives you another sharp crack (lose 1 STAMINA point) and mutters "We'll see, we'll see." He enters the cave, waving for you to follow him. You have to stoop to do so, groping along in the darkness until the old man lights an oil lamp in its furthest recesses. In the dim light you can make out a small, sparsely furnished chamber. The old man is sitting on the floor and motions for you to do the same. He explains that he is a hermit, and is living in isolation for the betterment of his soul and to escape the vices of the world. He apologises for beating you, and asks if you have any food for him. If you are not willing or able to give him a provision, he tells you that you must leave his cave if you do not wish to feel his wrath (in which case you can either attack him – turn to **175** – or retrace your steps back to the fork in the trail and take the other path – turn to **121**).

If you give him a provision, he will talk to you. Do you wish to ask him about the Mungies' Gold (turn to **171**), or about dangers in the forest (turn to **8**)?

20

The figurine causes a ruckus amongst the Mungies - a cacophony of shrieks and howls rises (add 1 to your DISTURBANCE) as the Mungies appear to argue and fight among themselves. After a frightening minute, the remaining Mungies, as one jabbering mob, bundle off into the forest. Add 1 to your LUCK. You can now carry on with your search for the Mungies' Gold (turn to **9**).

21

You search around the trail to see if there is anywhere you can lie down for the night away from prying eyes. You find a deep, mossy bed between two fallen tree trunks which looks like it should do the trick. As you investigate further, something shoots out from under one of the logs. *Test your Luck*. If you are unlucky, you are bitten by the Monitor Lizard which you have disturbed (lose 1 SKILL point and 2 STAMINA points as it has a slightly poisonous bite). If you are lucky, it misses you. In either case it flees into the night and you can rest your weary bones.

In the middle of the night, you wake to hear shuffling and snuffling nearby. Do you wish to investigate (turn to **6**), or do you want to lie still in the hope that whatever it is goes away (turn to **183**)?

22

You slip on the algae and fall. *Test your Luck*. If you are Unlucky, you fall into the raging torrent below and are dashed on the rocks beneath the swirling currents. Your adventure ends here. If you are Lucky, you land painfully on the tree-trunk (lose 1 STAMINA point), but manage to stay on the bridge. Turn to **74**.

23

You notice that several sets of red eyes in the canopy above are taking a particular interest in you. As you walk along, they seem to follow. Suddenly one of the pairs of eyes comes flying towards you. They belong to a WRAITH APE, which is gliding down from the canopy on the stretched skin between its arms and legs, wielding the leaf of a Blade Tree as a vicious edged weapon. You must fight the Wraith Ape with your Attack Strength reduced by 2 because of the dark (Wraith Apes have excellent night vision).

WRAITH APE SKILL 8 STAMINA 7

If you win, Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, turn to **52**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **30**.

24

You turn off the path on its left-hand side and scramble down the sloping edge of the hill. Aiming in the general direction of the path on the other side of the cleft, you have to fight your way through dense clots of briars, thorn-bushes, and all manner of tangled, unyielding vegetation. Very soon, you are covered in scrapes and stings (lose 2 STAMINA points) and are having difficulty finding your way. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Observation* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, you eventually struggle through the undergrowth up the opposite slope of the cleft and rejoin the path. If you fail, you becoming increasingly frustrated, your body is covered in cuts, welts, and small blood-sucking leeches, and you make a lot of noise crashing and banging through the undergrowth before you stagger onto the path on the other side of the cleft (lose 2 more STAMINA points and add 1 to your DISTURBANCE). Turn to **85**.

25

When you produce the scrolls, Banki Moon looks at you sadly and says “Dhumbaji!”. In the blink of an eye he disappears in a puff of smoke. Mystified, and more than a little alarmed, you continue on your way. Turn to **18**.

26

You are not sure how you are going to find Jilani. The jetty juts out from a shallow bay, flanked on both sides by wispy reed beds swaying in the wind. The waters of Lake Lumlé are grey, ruffled by the breeze blowing from the east. You decide to walk out to the end of the jetty, and as its old bone-coloured timbers echo under your steps, you see a small boat come out of the reeds on the left-hand side of the bay. It is Jilani, and he is waving wildly with delight! Overjoyed to see him, you rush to the end of the pier and help him moor the boat. “You’re alive!” he exclaims. Then his face falls. “But you did not find the gold. Alas, maybe it does not exist at all.” You tell Jilani about your adventures, and about Sansas’ thievery, and he curses the name of the First Noble of Kharé. You ask him how he knew where to find you on the shore, and he says “I was lingering around the shore of the lake, a little to the north of here. As dawn broke this morning I spotted a boat slip out of the reeds to the south and head out into the lake. Then I spotted a large flock of crows in the sky above the same area, and I came to investigate, sticking to the reedy margins in case I needed to hide. When I saw a figure coming towards the jetty, I did not believe it could be you, and I hid among the reeds to see who it was.” He seems genuinely delighted that you are back, despite losing the reward in gold that you had both hoped for.

He readies the boat for the journey back to Kharé and gets the fish grill going. He has caught plenty of fish in your absence, and you have a hearty breakfast as he sets sail eastwards. Add 4 to your STAMINA and turn to **64**.

27

What password do you want to try on them? Chose one of the following:

Valashka?	Turn to **111**.
Valaksha?	Turn to **125**.
Valaskha?	Turn to **199**.

Alternatively, you can attack them (turn to **32**), or surrender (turn to **73**).

28

Test your Disturbance. If you fail, turn to **87** (you do not need to roll on the Encounter Table in this instance). If you succeed, turn to **132**.

29

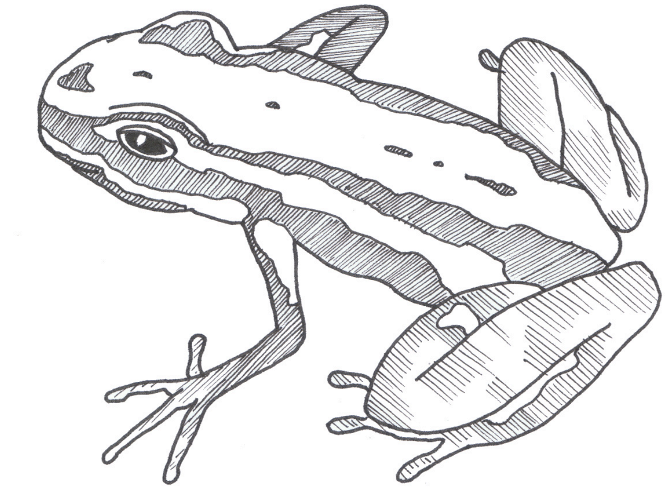
Your only hope is to flee through the forest during the night as best you can. As you run, you hear others crashing through the undergrowth, accompanied by human and not-so-human whoops and screams. At one point you hear arrows swish above your head, but whether they were aimed at you or not you do not know. The forest becomes a nightmarish blur of roots and branches, muddy slopes and moss-covered rocks. Very soon you are covered in cuts and scrapes as you flounder through the undergrowth, tripping and scrambling in the darkness in the hope that you escape the Mungie mayhem that you have helped to unleash (lose 2 STAMINA points). All the time you aim downhill in the hope that this will bring you nearer the lake and escape.

Suddenly you emerge from the forest and find yourself teetering on the brink of a ravine. Steadying yourself, you see in the starlight that the forest continues on the other side of the ravine, which is perhaps narrow enough to jump. From the sounds of things, it has a rushing stream at its bottom, quite a distance below. As you stand trying to decide on the best course of action, the forest behind you erupts in a crescendo of whoops and deep, booming howls. It sounds like the Mungies have been joined in their frenzy by other denizens of the Mauristatian foothills. A gut-wrenching, bloodcurdling human scream close by forces a decision upon you - you are going to have to jump the ravine if you are to survive the night!

With a quick look down into the impenetrable depths of the ravine, you walk away from the edge to give yourself a run up for your jump. The ravine is wider than you'd like, so this is going to have to be a good effort. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Jump* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, turn to **5**. If you fail, turn to **94**.

30

Two more Wraith Apes glide down from the canopy and attack in turn (fight one, then the other if you survive). Again, your Attack Strength is reduced by 2 because of the dark.



	SKILL	STAMINA
WRAITH APE	8	6
WRAITH APE	7	6

If you win, you keep your guard up through the rest of the night, and are relieved when the sky begins to lighten. As you have missed a night's sleep, lose 2 STAMINA points. Now turn to **127**.

31

You walk on, and the voice speaks again, this time slightly behind you. "What is yooor name? Very pleeezed to meet you, yes. Very goood." Will you continue to ignore the voice (turn to **37**), or stop and listen (turn to **182**)?

32

The five Shield Maidens of Lumlé raise their lances and shields and advance. You must fight the first three, all at the same time. If you kill one, the fourth one steps in to take her place. If you kill another, the fifth one steps in to take her place. If you kill four, the fifth Shield Maiden flees into the forest.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First SHIELD MAIDEN	9	8
Second SHIELD MAIDEN	8	7
Third SHIELD MAIDEN	7	6
Fourth SHIELD MAIDEN	6	7
Fifth SHIELD MAIDEN	8	6

If, somehow, you survive, add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score. You can take one of their lances to use as a weapon if you wish (if you do, you must leave your current weapon behind). You can also take one of their shields. If you take a shield, it can protect you from damage in battle. When an opponent scores a hit on you, *Test your Skill*. If you succeed, you reduce the damage they do by 1 STAMINA point. If you fail, normal damage is inflicted. Now turn to **162**.

33

The Witch cackles as you leave for the forest as night falls. Turn to **93**.

34

Suddenly, as you walk on, one of the Black Elves shoves you from behind, and you stumble onto your knees (lose 1 STAMINA point). You look up and see that they have surrounded you with their knives in hand. One of them shouts at you "So, maybe you got something for us, no?" Will you:

Attack them (deduct 1 from your Attack Strength in the first round as you are starting from a kneeling position)?	Turn to **78**.
Offer them some of your belongings?	Turn to **118**.

35

Sansas' two henchmen leap onto your boat and, as they do, their wreck slips beneath the waters. With a wicked grin, Sansas whips a throwing-dagger out of his robe and jams it in Jilani's throat. As Jilani falls overboard, Sansas' two henchmen pull daggers from their own belts and, along with Sansas, attack you. You are quickly overpowered and knocked overboard. You fall with a splash into the lake, and by the time you get your head above water again, your enemies, laughing at your predicament, have manoeuvred your boat out of reach and left you to your fate in the water. Even if you are very lucky or are an expert swimmer, you are unlikely to survive for long.

36

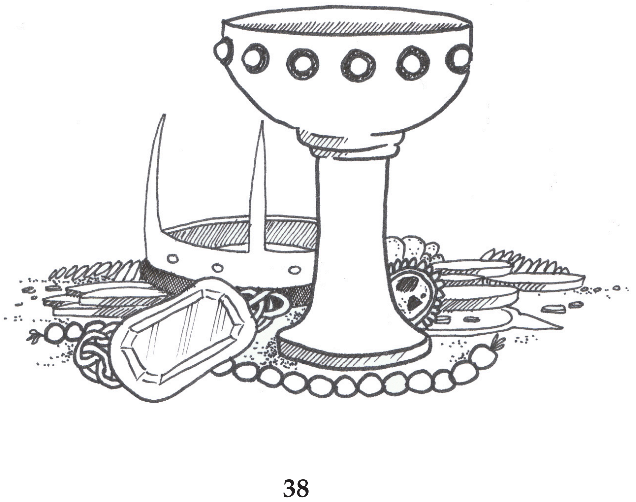
You grab the curly mop and fling it as far as you can. As you do, it lets out an almighty roar, the likes of which seems hardly possible from such a small creature. The JIB-JIB (for that is what it is) races off into the undergrowth screaming as if the world was about to end. All around you birds shriek and other denizens of the canopy yelp and yammer. Add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score. It's about time you departed this scene of disturbance before some more dangerous creature comes to investigate. Turn to **127**.

37

Suddenly a massive weight falls on you, and you find yourself under attack from a mass of green fur, strangling arms, raking claws and vicious fangs. Lose 2 STAMINA points, and reduce your Attack Strength by 1 point for the first two rounds of this fight.

CHAMPAQUE	SKILL 10	STAMINA 10

If you win, add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score and turn to **41**.



38

Peering through the fading light of the forest, you notice two little birds, Ant-wrens, hopping along the trail to the left, following a line of ants. Now, do you want to follow the left fork (turn to **55**) or the right (turn to **93**)?

39

The voices grow louder as you continue along the path, before falling silent as you approach. You turn a corner and see three BLACK ELVES sitting around a pot over a small fire at the base of a massive Bagnya Tree. As is typical of their kind, they wear an assortment of raggy clothes, and bone and ebony ornaments. Their long hair is dyed with ochre and is tied up and braided with beads and pins. They all have knives at their belts, and one of them has a bow and arrows. As they wait for the pot to boil, they are passing their time playing a game of Knucklebones. Do you wish to:

Attack them?	Turn to **78**.
Talk to them?	Turn to **184**.
Ignore them and continue along the path?	Turn to **92**.

40

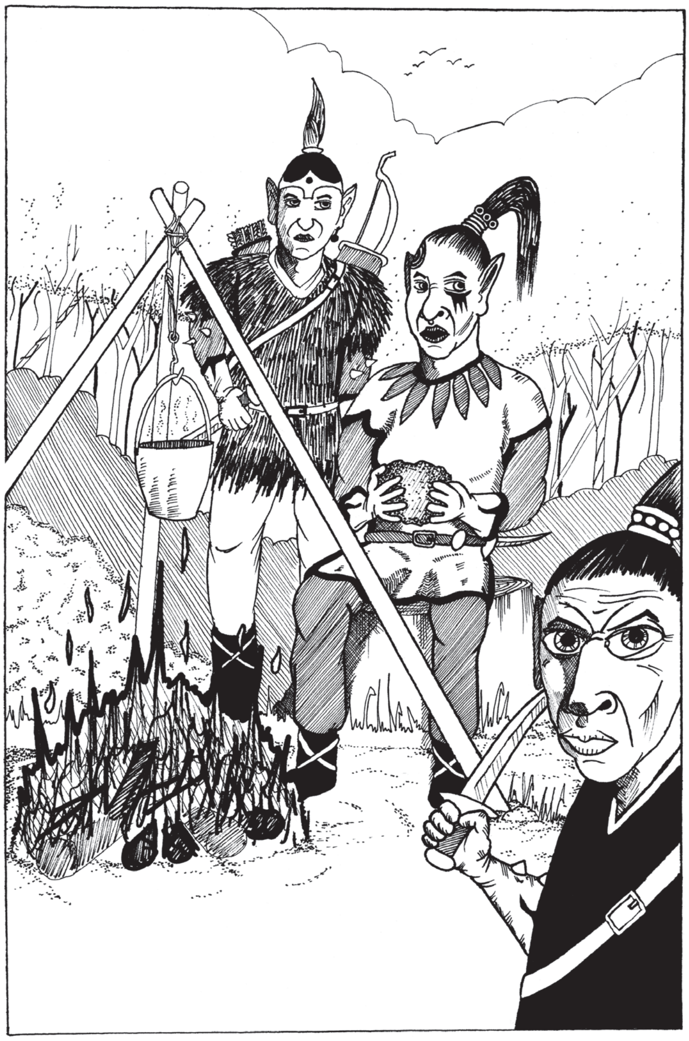
All around you you can hear the screams of men and apes, but you can see almost nothing in the growing darkness. Suddenly you are set upon by two MUNGIES, who leap on you from the trees above. You must fight them both at the same time, with your Attack Strength reduced by 2 because of the darkness and the surprise attack.

	SKILL	STAMINA
MUNGIE	6	4
MUNGIE	5	4

If you defeat them, turn to **29**.

41

Happy to have survived your encounter with the dangerous Champaque, you carry on along the trail. You are now deep in the cloud forest, and you feel that the Mungies' Gold cannot be far away. Up ahead you can see that the forest opens up and the trail is bathed in afternoon sunlight. You come out into the light at the top of a bank with a spectacular view of the Cloudcap Mountains in front of you. The emerald green forest sweeps towards the foothills of the mountains, and the trail forks as it wends towards them. The left-hand fork leads towards a low foothill with a rounded bare top. The right-hand trail leads towards a low foothill with a jagged bare top. Do you wish to follow the right-hand trail (turn to **28**) or the left-hand one (turn to **133**)?



42

If you have the Witch's poison, and you have not used it already, you can now apply it to your blade. Remember to *Test your Skill* to avoid poisoning yourself. Now you can attempt the crazy feat of jumping onto the Manticore's back. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Jump* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you fail, turn to **163**. If you succeed, turn to **65**.

43

The scent gland lies under the Skunkbear's short tail. Unfortunately the stench of the animal is concentrated in this area, and you gag several times before managing to locate it (lose 1 STAMINA point). Removing the scent gland will be a tricky operation, even with the creature dead! *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Deftness* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you are successful, turn to **60**. If you fail, turn to **143**.

44

As you draw near the shuffling, it ceases. Roll on the Encounter Table and follow the instructions there.

If you are still alive, will you head towards the sound of running water to the right (turn to **181**), or will you travel in the direction of a swarm of Fireflies in the forest to your left (turn to **136**)?

45

The track leads up through the forest towards the foothills of the Cloudcap Mountains. The forest begins to open up a little as the high ground becomes rocky and dry.

After a short while you come to a wide clearing. As you stand to take breath, among the buzz of insects in the late afternoon sun, a number of MUNGIES emerge from the forest and surround you. The number of Mungies is the same number as you rolled in the previous paragraph. From this point on, keep track of the number of Mungies around you. They chatter in an agitated fashion. Do you have anything to give them to distract them so that you can pass? If you have any Resplendent Quetzal tail fathers, turn to **102**. If you do not, turn to **88**.

46

You give the Shield Maiden some of your food, and she wolfs it down, all the time eying you suspiciously. Cross 1 provision from your adventure sheet. When she is finished she seems much better, and can sit up on her own, rubbing the binding on her leg. She tries talking to you, but she doesn't speak much of your language, so she doesn't make a whole lot of sense. She keeps repeating a phrase which sounds something like "pass, Valashka". With the conversation going nowhere, you decide to leave her and return to the trail to carry on your search for the Mungies' Gold (turn to **142**).

47

Jilani guides his boat alongside the wreck of Sansas' boat, making sure not to touch against it lest his own boat suffer the same fate. "So how are we going to do this then?" asks Sansas, an inscrutable look in his dark eyes. Do you ask them to start passing the gold over first (turn to **84**), allow all three of them on board your boat (turn to **106**), or allow Sansas only on board your boat while his companions pass the gold over (turn to **91**)?

48

Before the Manticore has time to attack, you sprint for the nearest tree, a tall Pango. But you don't have a lot of time to get out of harm's way, as the Manticore is hot on your heels. *Test your Skill*, at -1, unless you have *Run* or *Climb* Special Skill, in which case test it at +1. If you succeed, turn to **114**. If you fail, turn to **135**.

49

You are sure that he is the old man who was leading the Mungie through the streets of Kharé. There is no sign of the Mungie now. How did he get here, and what is he doing? Return to **153**, and read the rest of the paragraph.

50

How do you plan on getting tail feathers from the Quetzal? Do you want to try sneaking up to it and plucking them from below (turn to **112**), or do you want to shoot it with an arrow (turn to **155** if you have a bow and arrows and wish to do this)?

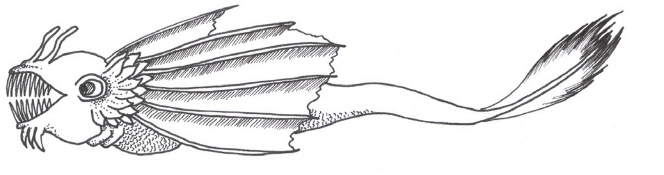
51

The Black Elves have little to trade. They will sell you a bamboo flute (3 Gold Pieces), up to three lots of provisions (2 Gold Pieces each), a long fighting knife (10 Gold Pieces), a pair of boots in your size (6 Gold Pieces), and a bow with six arrows (12 Gold Pieces). You can either use money or barter, but the Elves will not pay you money for any of your belongings. You can barter any of the following items:

Your sword	worth 20 Gold Pieces
A Mungie figurine	worth 8 Gold Pieces
A rope and grapple	worth 4 Gold Pieces
A potion	worth 8 Gold Pieces
A skeleton key	worth 8 Gold Pieces

If you barter, the Elves will not give anything away for less than the stated value. So, for example, if you want the knife and three provisions, they will accept goods of at least 16 Gold Pieces in value, but not less than that. If you were to barter these for your sword, you would be down 4 Gold Pieces (they might throw in the bamboo flute in this deal though, more or less evening things out). Such is the life of the trader in remote parts of the world!

Then the Elves fall silent and begin to stare at you. Feeling uncomfortable with their attentions, you make your apologies and leave. Turn to **154**.



52

Seeing your slaughter of the first Wraith Ape, the others in the trees above decide better than to attack and their red eyes blink out as they disappear into the canopy. Add 1 to your LUCK. You keep your guard up through the rest of the night and are relieved when the sky begins to lighten. As you have missed a night's sleep, lose 2 STAMINA points. Now turn to **127**.

53

With a wild light in their eyes, the Shield Maidens prepare for your attack. You must fight them all at the same time.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First SHIELD MAIDEN	9	8
Second SHIELD MAIDEN	8	7
Third SHIELD MAIDEN	7	6

If you kill two of the Shield Maidens, the third one will flee. Add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score. If you survive, you can take one of their lances to use as a weapon if you wish. You can also take one of their shields. If you take a shield, it can protect you from damage in battle. When an opponent scores a hit on you, *Test your Skill*. If you succeed, you reduce the damage they do by 1 STAMINA point. Now turn to **162**.

54

You push your way through the undergrowth towards the noise, although things have now fallen silent. You emerge from the thickets to see an armour-clad woman lying on the ground with a shield beside her. The SHIELD MAIDEN OF LUMLÉ is either dead or unconscious, and is covered in blood. As you walk towards her, she opens her eyes, screams "Aaiyeee!", and scrabbles weakly for her sword. Add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score. Do you want to leave her and rejoin the trail (turn to **142**), end her misery (turn to **145**), or try to calm her down and help her (turn to **186**)?

55

After a short distance, the trail comes to a wide clearing. Much of the ground is covered in dense bindweeds with bright crimson flowers, almost luminescent in the evening light. At the centre of the clearing stands a hut with a shuttered window and an open door. Smoke comes from both the doorway and from a chimney in the middle of the thatched roof. Do you want to approach the hut (turn to **156**), or do you want to carry on through the forest as night draws in (turn to **93**)?

56

Congratulations! You have defeated the guardian of the Mungies' Gold, which is now yours for the taking. Add 3 points to your LUCK, and 2 points to your DISTURBANCE score. Mopping the sweat from your brow with your sleeve, you stride towards the cave mouth, eager to see your prize.

And what a prize it is! Piles of gold coins, jewels set in gold, decorative golden ornaments, golden torques and crowns, statuettes of gold studded with precious stones, and much, much more. So much, in fact, that you will only be able to take a fraction of it with you. Glancing around you, like a thief at work, you select the finest pieces and stuff your backpack as full as possible with treasure. You have no idea how much it is all worth, but you can be sure that when you get back to Kharé you will be among the richest in the city, perhaps even the whole of Kakhabad. The items you have collected must be worth hundreds, perhaps even thousands of gold pieces. Unfortunately you can't take the lot, and the remaining treasure, many times what you have taken, will have to remain unclaimed for another day.

Hoisting your heavy backpack on your shoulders (and hoping the straps take the weight!), you turn one last time towards the treasure you can't take with you, sighing in resignation, but content with what you have. Suddenly you hear a most unexpected noise, which your brain takes several seconds to recognise – the sound of hands clapping slowly.

You spin around, wide-eyed in alarm, and are greeted with a rather curious sight. A man of middle height, dressed in a robe fastened across his bare chest, stands in front of the trees and undergrowth before you. It is he who has been applauding your achievements. His half-long, swept-back dark hair, his short beard, and his commanding gaze leave you in no doubt as to who this is – it is that infamous pirate and rogue, Sansas, First Noble of Kharé! But what is he doing here?

"Well done, my friend, well done indeed!" he says. "Quite a feat to dispatch such a mighty beast. A wonderful spectacle to behold. And such a prize! Never have I seen so much gold. Surely there's enough there for us all to share?" With that he chuckles and, as he does, a band of rogues and ne'er-do-wells emerge from the forest and stand next to Sansas. Some stand with swords at the ready, others level their bows in your direction.

"It seems, brave warrior, that you are outnumbered," says Sansas. "Why don't your lay down your weapons and your belongings and we can have a look at what we have found?" Sansas' henchmen bristle threateningly at you. Do you wish to do as Sansas commands (turn to **188**), or will you rush at them in attack (turn to **101**)?

57

The man introduces himself as Banki Moon, a Sage. He says that he has travelled from the Shamutanti Hills, where his sister lives, through the Krooe Valley and Nagaland, to the holy Lake Schabalala, and then to here, where he is studying "the ecosystem." You have no idea what that might mean. Do you want to wish him good luck, and get on with your journey (turn to **18**), attack him (turn to **126**), or ask him one of the following questions:

When was he last in Kharé?	Turn to **3**.
If you have some scrolls with an unknown script, what do they say?	Turn to **25**.
What dangers are there in the forest?	Turn to **178**.
Where you might find the Mungies' Gold?	Turn to **130**.

58

The path descends into the valley until you come to a small rushing river, flowing northeast to southwest. You can have a bath here if you want. A trail runs downstream (southwest) and upstream (northeast). Will you head downstream (turn to **174**), or upstream (turn to **193**)?

59

The ivory Mungie figurine is a powerful Luck charm. While you have it in your possession, you can increase your *Initial* LUCK by 1 point. Add 1 to your LUCK! If at any point you lose possession of the figurine, you must return your *Initial* LUCK to its original value and must lose 1 LUCK point. Now return to **134**.

60

You have removed the scent gland without bursting it. You wrap it in a fallen Jubalani leaf and store it carefully in your pack. Add 1 point to your DISTURBANCE score and turn to **129**.

61

You sever the Manticore's spine and instantly it loses the power in its rear legs and tail. They flop uselessly to the ground, and you are thrown off the Manticore's back (lose 1 STAMINA point, but gain 3 LUCK points). You can now fight the Manticore on more manageable terms, as it flaps its wings weakly and crawls around on its forelegs, snarling in frustration.

MANTICORE SKILL 6 STAMINA 9

If you defeat the Manticore, turn to **56**.

62

The Witch waves her hand and mutters something incomprehensible at you, then tells you to be gone. Lose 2 LUCK points, and deduct 1 from your *Initial* LUCK – you have been cursed! Now will you leave as she commands (turn to **160**), or attack the Witch (turn to **110**)?

63

Suddenly the Manticore loses patience. With a roar, it charges at the tree, beating its enormous feathered wings to give it extra reach. In an explosion of claws, fangs and shattered wood, you are knocked from the tree, falling over five metres to the ground. *Test your Luck*. If you are Unlucky, you are badly injured by the fall and lie on the ground, half conscious and groaning with pain, as the Manticore puts you out of your misery! Your adventure ends here. If you are Lucky, you fall painfully (lose 1 SKILL point and 3 STAMINA points), but you are not finished yet. As you scrabble to get to your feet, the Manticore attacks. Turn to **76**, deducting 1 point from your Attack Strength for the first round of the fight.

64

There is a slight head-wind, and Jilani is forced to tack somewhat, looping south into the middle of Lake Lumlé. He is less than happy about this, for it is in the deepest waters in the middle of the lake that the most dangerous creatures are said to dwell.

Some hours later, Jilani exclaims and points to the south. Through the mists rising from the surface of the lake in the mid-day sun, you spot what looks like three human figures standing on a rock with their arms outstretched towards you. You can just about make out their cries. Jilani indicates that you should leave them, as he believes they are evil spirits trying to lure you to your deaths. Will you:

Take Jilani's advice and leave them to their fate?	Turn to **10**.
Ask Jilani to bring your boat nearer to them to investigate further?	Turn to **71**.

65

You land on the Manticore's back, one leg on either side of it, as if you were riding a horse, but facing the wrong direction! The Manticore writhes beneath, beating its wings and thrashing its tail (luckily for you, it has an in-built instinct not to strike at its own back, at least not too readily). *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Climb* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1 (note that in this instance, a rope and grapple will be of no use to you). If you fail, turn to **163**. If you succeed, turn to **197**.

66

You notice that the right-hand path has some booted foot prints leading along it. Do you wish to follow the right-hand path (turn to **191**) or the left-hand one (turn to **12**)?

67

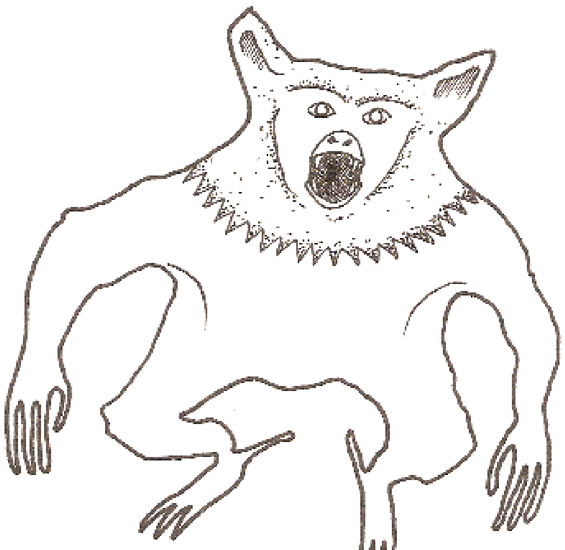
He had assumed that you have come looking for the Mungies' Gold, and he grunts sceptically, doubting your chances. He says that he does not know exactly where it lies, but he has heard that it may be found towards the source of the Gaggaji River, which flows southwest from the foothills of the Cloudcap Mountains. Turn to **89**.

68

The Witch offers you a warm meal (add 4 to your STAMINA), a bucket of soapy water to wash yourself (you can remove any SKILL penalty as a result of being covered in stinking goo) and a bed for the night. Before you settle down to sleep she says, "Maybe you'll do a wee job for me in the morning, eh?" Without explaining what she means, she leaves you to sleep. It is hardly the best night's sleep you've ever had, as the Witch spends most of the night by her cauldron muttering and crooning, but it is better than spending the night in the wild forest. Add 2 to your STAMINA.

In the morning, the Witch offers you a cold drink of water while she explains what she would like you to do for her. "There's a kind of wee frog that lives up in the canopy, in the water that collects in the joints and knots in the branches. It is striped dark green and pale, and 'tis the most poisonous thing in the forest. I would like you to get one for me," she tells you.

If you accept the Witch's task, turn to **148**. If you decline, turn to **179**.



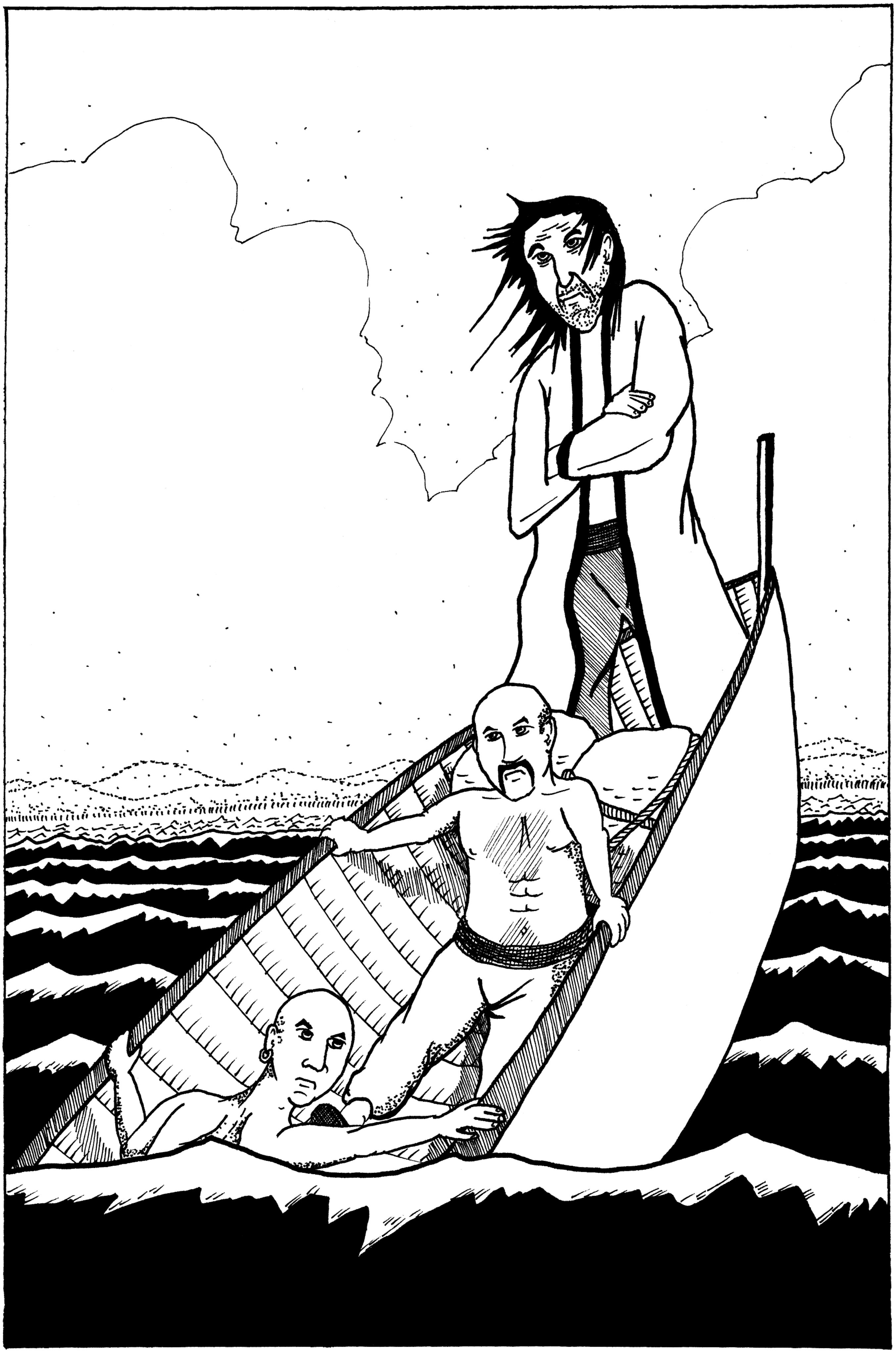
69

You call out to see if anyone is at home, but there is no response. Add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score. Now, do you wish to return to the other path (turn to **12**), or look inside the cabin (turn to **90**)?

70

Suddenly all hell breaks loose. Enraged at the desecration of their shrine, every Mungie for miles around has descended on the Manticore's cave. Shrieking and whooping, hundreds of the creatures leap from the forest in a wild frenzy, some attacking the men who stand at the scene of desecration, others beating the ground and ululating in fury. Add 2 to your DISTURBANCE, as you are now at the centre of a raging storm of Mungie fury!

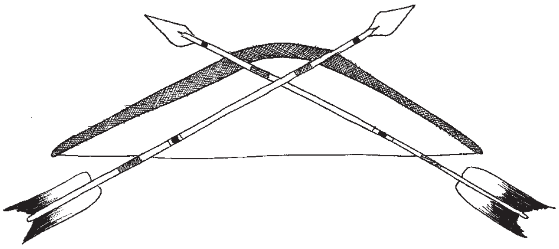
As Sansas' men are engulfed in a tangle of fur, claws and fangs, you are released, your captors scrabbling for weapons to defend themselves. And as the Mungies come scream-



ing towards you, you are going to have to do the same! A sword lies in the ground before you, but do you have time to grab it before the Mungies attack? *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Run*, *Jump* or *Deftness* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you fail, you must continue your adventure, for now, without a weapon. If you succeed, you manage to grab the sword (remove the Attack Strength penalty which was the result of you not having a weapon). Now you must fight a screaming Mungie which is flying through the air, fangs bared, towards you!

MUNGIE SKILL 6 STAMINA 4

After one Attack Round, turn to **79** if you are still alive.



71

Jilani brings his boat closer to the figures. As you near them, you see that they are three men on the remains of a sinking boat. To your surprise, the sinking boat is Sansas', and none other than the piratical rogue and two of his henchmen cling to the fast disappearing fore-deck of their boat. Beside them, no doubt adding to their problem, is a stack of chests and sacks which can only contain the looted gold! You cannot help but grin at his ill fortune.

Sansas and his companions cease their cries as you draw near. Even in his current circumstances, Sansas is quite the performer. He bows as he recognises you and says, "Ah, my good friend. The capricious god of Fate is not done with us yet. As you can see, my predicament is an unenviable one, the result of the predations of a most insignificant creature". Sansas picks up a fat Wood Ant grub from the deck and flicks it into the water.

"I don't suppose you'd see fit to rescuing myself and my good companions from a similar watery grave? No? Of course not. But I see that your eye is on the gold! Would you see it sink into the depths of great Lumlé too? I shall make you a deal. If you rescue my two companions and I, you can have half of the gold. As you can see, we are unarmed." The two companions make noises of complaint at this halving of their profits. "Now, now, my good fellows, surely your lives are worth more than that?" Faced with that choice, the two pirates grudgingly nod their consent.

"So, Manticore Slayer, time is not on our side. Quickly, bring your boat alongside ours so that you can save our lives and your gold." Will you:

Refuse to help Sansas and his companions, leaving them to the watery fate that they no doubt deserve, but losing the gold at the same time?	Turn to **77**.
Do as Sansas suggests?	Turn to **47**.

72

Roll 4 dice. Remember the total and turn to **45**.

73

The Shield Maidens strip you of your meagre belongings and your clothes, down to your loin cloth. They bind and blindfold you, leading you through the forest to one of their encampments. When they remove your blindfold, you see that you are in a bamboo cage, which they lock you in as you rub your eyes in the dawn light. For the next five days the Shield Maidens treat you well, feeding you regularly, although they rarely speak to you. On the evening of the fifth day, as the Moon rises, you are led from your cage and become the object of their arcane moonlit rituals, after which they put you to death.

74

The trail soon becomes hard to follow in the dense forest and eventually disappears. You try retracing your steps but get hopelessly lost in the thick jungle. Unfortunately as you struggle through the undergrowth you walk into a Blade Tree and are slashed by its razor-sharp leaves. Roll 1 die to determine the damage you receive:

ROLL	RESULT
1	You receive a minor cut (lose 1 STAMINA point).
2	You are gashed on the arm (lose 2 STAMINA points).
3	You are gashed on the leg (lose 2 STAMINA points and 1 SKILL point).
4	Your sword-arm is badly slashed (lose 3 STAMINA points and 2 SKILL points).
5	You are blinded! Lose 4 STAMINA points and 3 SKILL points.
6	Your neck is slashed and you bleed to death...

If you survive, you decide that trying to find your way back to the log bridge and the upstream trail is the best course of action. As you fight through the clinging undergrowth, you make a lot of noise (add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score). *Test your Disturbance*. If you fail, roll on the Encounter Table and follow the instructions given. If you succeed or if you survive the Encounter, you must *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, you stumble out of the thickets next to the log bridge (add 1 to your LUCK). If you fail, repeat all of the actions in this paragraph (roll 1 die for the Blade Tree, *Test your Disturbance*, *Test your Luck*) until you are either dead or lucky.

To cross the tree-trunk bridge, you must again *Test Your Skill* at -1, unless you have *Climb* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, turn to **193**. If you fail, you slip on the algae and fall. *Test your Luck*. If you are Unlucky, you fall into the raging torrent below and are dashed on the rocks beneath the swirling currents. Your adventure ends here. If you are Lucky, you land painfully on the tree-trunk (lose 1 STAMINA point), but manage to stay on the bridge. You retrace your steps to the junction and follow the trail upstream. Turn to **193**.

75

Unfortunately your boots get sucked off in the mire, and there is no way you will be able to retrieve them. The barefooted Jilani shrugs his shoulders and suggests you might be able to find some on your journey. Until you do, you must reduce your SKILL by 2 points for all fighting, climbing, jumping and running you find yourself having to do. Other tasks, such as swimming, observing, aiming, sneaking and manipulating things with your hands will not be affected. Now turn to **97**.

76

The Manticore, an obscene mix of Lion, Scorpion, Eagle and Human, is one of the deadliest creatures on the face of Titan, and this is a particularly powerful specimen. In addition to its fearsome claws and fangs, it attacks with its sting-tipped tail. If the Manticore makes a successful hit against you, you must roll one die. If you roll 1-4, it wounds you with its claws or fangs, and you must deduct 3 points from your STAMINA (2 if you are Lucky, 4 if you are not). On a roll of 5 or 6, it strikes you with its venom-laden sting instead. If this happens, you must deduct 6 points from your STAMINA and 1 point from your SKILL (5 points of STAMINA if you are Lucky, 7 if you are not; the SKILL damage remains in either case).

MANTICORE SKILL 12 STAMINA 18

If, somehow, you defeat the Manticore, turn to **56**.

77

Convinced that it is too great a risk to give Sansas another chance, and deciding that you would rather lose the gold than reward them with rescue and half of the profits, you tell Jilani to leave the pirates to their fates. With a cry, Sansas' two companions jump into the lake and attempt to reach your boat, but Jilani quickly manoeuvres the boat away from their desperate thrashings. Sansas stands on the sinking deck with his impenetrable gaze fixed on you. "I shan't forget this. Watch for Sansas – he has escaped from worse straits than this. One day I will find you, have no doubt..." With that, his boat (and the gold) sinks, and he is left treading water as your boat turns for Kharé.

Jilani directs his boat away from him and soon he disappears from sight. The wind turns in your favour and the boat races towards Kharé and safety. As evening falls, you spot the cityport in the distance, its miasma dark against the sky and its purple limestone walls turned red by the setting sun. You have survived your search for the Mungies' Gold, but you have returned empty handed. You can't help feeling that your abandonment of Sansas will one day catch up with you, but for now you are thankful to have got away with your life.

78

The three Black Elves attack you at the same time.

	SKILL	STAMINA
BLACK ELF	7	6
BLACK ELF	8	6
BLACK ELF	6	7

If you win, add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score. You search through their belongings and camp, where you find 30 Gold Pieces. If you have not bought them from the Elves already, you also find a bow with six arrows, a bamboo flute, and enough trail rations for 3 Provisions. You can take any of these if you wish. If you are without footwear, you are in luck – one of the dead Elves is wearing boots which are about your size (any boot-related SKILL penalty no longer applies). If you bartered any of your own items with the Black Elves, you may retrieve these too.

Once you have taken what you want, you continue on your journey (turn to **85**).

79

You bat the Mungie aside and decide that dashing for the forest is the safest bet. As you charge for cover, one of Sansas' beefy brawlers steps in front of you with a wide-eyed face of near madness, and attacks.

BRAWLER SKILL 7 STAMINA 9

After two Attack Rounds, a pair of Mungies leaps onto the Brawler, and he falls beneath their rending claws and tearing teeth. If you are still alive, you waste no time, and dash for the undergrowth before you as the evening darkness deepens and as rain begins to fall. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **29**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **40**.

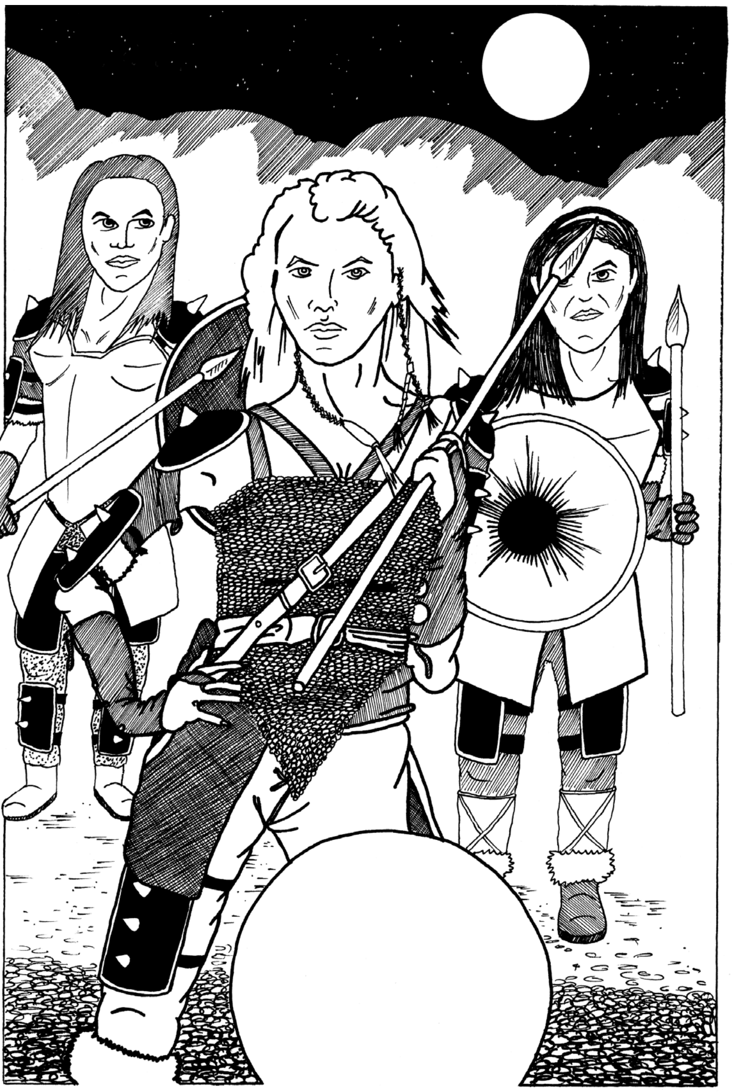
80

The bow can only be used with the quiver of arrows and vice versa. If you have bought one without the other, you will have to hope that you find the other part of the equipment on your journey.

To use the bow and arrows, you must *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Aim* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. You can only do so before battle if you are instructed that you have enough time to do so. If you succeed in your SKILL roll, you have hit your opponent – deduct 1 SKILL point, and 1 die of STAMINA points from their statistics. Remember to keep count of your arrows, which cannot be reused. Now return to **134**.

81

"There are many dangers in the forest, and you'll be lucky to survive here for long," he says. "Snakes, spiders, apes, wolves, leeches, goblins, and much worse." You ask him how



he manages to survive in such a hostile environment, and he taps the blade of his axe and smiles. “One other thing”, he continues. “Avoid the Shield Maidens of Lumlé at all costs. The sisters won’t abide your presence in their lands. I have a special agreement with them, so they leave me alone.” Soon you decide you should get on with your journey, so you make your excuses and leave. Turn to **89**.

82

Now can you catch the frog? *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Deftness* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, you have managed to trap the frog in the vial the Witch has given you. Add 1 LUCK point and turn to **17**. If you fail, the frog jumps out of the way, just as you thought you had it. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **99**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **158**.

83

You press on through the forest, in the hope that you are going in the right direction, towards Lake Lumlé, Jilani, and safety. The night is growing old, and the Moon is lowering in the sky. You climb up a ridge, hoping there might still be enough light for you to see what lies ahead. As you crest the ridge, you see through the trees that the eastern sky is beginning to pale as dawn approaches. And to your delight you see that the light of the Moon is reflected on water below you to the east - Lake Lumlé is not far away!

Eager to reach the shore, you plunge down the slope in front of you, but are brought up sharp when you hear a voice cry out in front of you “Harya!” You freeze, just as three female warriors, carrying lances and shields, and dressed in armour and black felt, emerge from the undergrowth. In the dim light of the Moon, these SHIELD MAIDENS OF LUMLÉ look beautiful and fearsome. One of them, with striking blond hair, strides forward and challenges you. “Alanka vist’ nyuma!” she shouts at you. Do you want to attack them (turn to **53**), or try to talk to them (turn to **198**)?

84

Sansas spreads his hands in ignominy. “Time is short, my friend”, he reminds you. But you insist, so he motions for his companions to pass over the first heavy sack of gold. They hoist it over to you, and as you grab it, two things happen at the same time. You hear a grunt from Jilani, and look round to see a throwing-dagger hilt protruding from his throat, his life’s blood flowing out around it. At the same time, Sansas’ henchmen give the sack you are holding a mighty pull rather than releasing it, and you lurch forward towards them. You fall with a splash into the lake. By the time you get your head above water again, Sansas is on board your boat, and one of his men is passing him sacks of gold. The other henchman jabs at you with a sharp boat hook, keeping you away from the boats until all of the gold has been transferred. With that done, he leaps onto your boat to join the other two as their wreck slips beneath the waters. Laughing at your predicament, they quickly manoeuvre the boat out of your reach and leave you to your fate in the water. Even if you are very lucky or are an expert swimmer, you are unlikely to survive for long.

85

You continue along the path, which leads you into a dense forest of rhododendron. The afternoon, hot and heavy, wears on. The path comes out of the rhododendron forest and wends its way down through an area of rocky outcrops and stunted thorn-bushes towards the dense forests below. At one point the trail forks. You notice some strange marks on a rock which point to the right fork. Do you wish to follow the right fork (turn to **165**) or the left (turn to **121**)?

86

The poison is extremely effective, even on such a large creature. If you end up fighting the Manticore, deduct 3 points from the SKILL and 6 points from the STAMINA scores given. Also remember that during combat it will lose 1 SKILL point and 2 STAMINA points in each subsequent Attack Round, regardless of whether you injure it or not (if you injure it, it suffers even more damage). Now will you wait in the tree to see what happens (turn to **103**), attempt to jump onto the Manticore’s back (turn to **42),** climb down from the tree to attack the Manticore (turn to **76**), or fire another arrow (turn to **115**)?

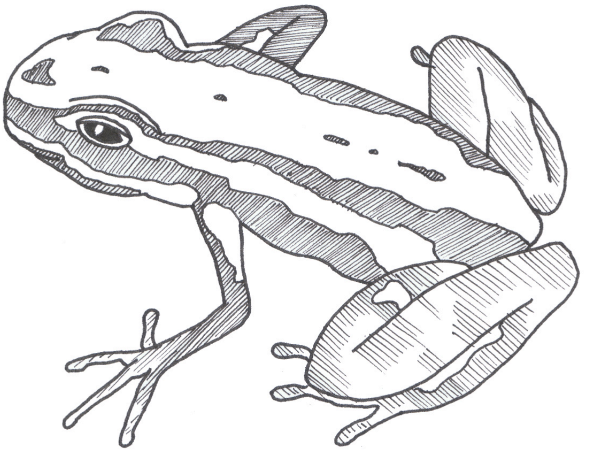
87

Roll 2 dice. Remember the total rolled and turn to **168**.

88

Do you have any gold pieces left? If you do not have five or more gold pieces, or if you do not wish to give them any, the Mungies surrounding you bristle threateningly. Will you offer them something else (turn to **176**), or will you attempt to get past them (turn to **190**)?

If you do have at least five gold pieces and are willing to part with them, you find that for every 5 gold pieces you give them, one Mungie runs off into the forest to secrete its treasure. If there are no Mungies left, you can continue on your way (turn to **9**). If there are some left, you can either offer them something else (turn to **176**), or attempt to get past them (turn to **190**).



89

The Woodsman wishes you the best for your journey. If you do not have any boots, he offers you a pair (you can remove the negative SKILL modifier for not having any). He also offers you two provisions worth of food. Wishing him all the best, you retrace you steps back to the fork in the trail and take the left-hand path. Turn to **12**.

90

You peer through the door of the cabin into its dim interior. There is only one room, with a small wood-burner (the source of the smoke), a table and chair, a rough bed against one wall, and a few small furnishings. A newly made loaf and some fruit and cheese lie on the table (worth 2 Provisions), and a sturdy pair of boots stands by the stove. A bow and a quiver of arrows hangs on one of the walls, and a dagger lies beside the food on the table. You can take all, some, or none of these items (note whatever you take on your adventure sheet).

If you called out before looking into the cabin, turn to **169**. Otherwise, *Test Your Disturbance*. If you fail, turn to **169**. If you succeed, turn to **159**.

91

Sansas leaps onto your boat with an eager look on his face. Quickly his henchmen begin handing the pair of you heavy sacks of treasure, which Jilani distributes evenly in the hull. There is far more gold here than you could ever have carried yourself!

When all the gold has been unloaded from the sinking boat, Sansas' henchmen get ready to jump onto your boat. Will you let them (turn to **35**) or will you suggest to Sansas that you leave them to their fate (turn to **157**)?

92

You ignore the Black Elves and walk past them. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **85**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **105**.

93

As you walk through the forest, it gets darker and darker as the sun sets behind the Cloudcap Mountains in the west. Do you wish to find somewhere to sleep for the night in the hope of avoiding the denizens of the forest (turn to **21**) or do you wish to keep walking through the night in the hope of making some progress in your quest and in order to keep your guard against the denizens of the forest (turn to **151**)?

94

Unfortunately you do not jump far enough and miss the far side of the ravine. You plummet into the darkness below, falling into an ice-cold, raging mountain stream. *Test your Luck*. If you are Unlucky, you fall to your death on the jagged rocks which jut out of the frothing waters. If you are Lucky, you miss the rocks, and plunge into the torrent (lose 2 STAMINA points). As you are swept downstream, you lose any weapon you were carrying (-3 to your Attack Strength from now on), and struggle to keep your head above the water. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Swim* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you fail, you are swept under, just as you are about to take breath – lose 2 STAMINA points and 1 SKILL point. If you succeed, you manage to keep your head above water.

If you are still alive, you are helpless as the force of the water tosses you over and over. *Test your Skill* again, at -1 unless you have *Swim* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you fail, you are half drowned as you struggle against the current (lose 2 STAMINA points and 1 SKILL point). If you succeed, you are bashed about, but manage to keep your head above the water most of the time (lose 2 STAMINA points).

Eventually the river deposits you on a gravelly shoal, and (assuming you are still alive) you stagger to your feet. It is not immediately apparent to you which way you should go now. Will you climb over some rocks beside the river (turn to **181**) or will you enter an area of thick hanging creepers (turn to **161**)?

95

Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, turn to **187**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **110**.

96

All of a sudden the speaker drops down from the trees above to sit on the path in front of you. It is a large ape-like creature, with thick green fur, long, strong arms, and a face which is frighteningly human in aspect. It is a CHAMPAQUE, and it studies you intently. Do you know who Chali is? If so, turn to **196**. If not, turn to **113**.

97

Back on board the boat, and stinking of lake slime, you ask Jilani to find you somewhere better to get onto the shore. He sails up the coast a short distance and finds a patch of drier ground where you can disembark more gracefully. Once he sees that you are safely ashore, Jilani wishes you all the best and manoeuvres his boat off-shore, leaving you to your quest for the Mungies' Gold.

You walk up from the shore and survey the scene before you. Behind the boggy shore is a short stretch of bare turf, beyond which the cloud forests of eastern Mauristatia begin. In the distance you can see the green clad foothills of the Cloudcap Mountains, and behind them you catch glimpses of the black rocks and white ice-fields of the mountains themselves, amid the wispy clouds and bright blue skies. That way the Mungies' Gold must lie, so you waste no time in setting off towards the forest.

Just as you do, however, you hear an alarming shriek of terror ahead of you. Suddenly a skeleton-thin man, dressed in tatters and covered in sores, bursts out of the forest. He looks around wildly until he sees you, at which point he shrieks again, and comes running right at you! Add 1 to your Disturbance score. You hardly have time to draw your weapon before he is upon you, screaming all the while. He attacks you with his nails and teeth.

MADMAN	SKILL 5	STAMINA 6

If you reduce his STAMINA to 2, you can chose to spare him (turn to **16**) or finish him off (turn to **109**).

98

The rope and grapple will prove useful for all sorts of climbing. While you still have them, you can act as if you have *Climb* Special Skill, unless you are instructed otherwise. If at any time you lose the rope and grapple, you lose this Special Skill again. Now return to **134**.

99

The frog jumps through the foliage and you can't find it again, no matter how hard you look. Eventually you give up. You can either return to the Witch to tell her that you have failed (turn to **138**), or continue on your journey (turn to **160**).

100

Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, turn to **163**. If you are Unlucky, the Manticore swipes at you with its sting, striking you on the shoulder (lose 1 SKILL point and 1 die of STAMINA points). Turn to **163**.

101

You charge straight at Sansas, screaming in rage, ready to fight him to the death. But as you do, his men let loose, and you are peppered with their arrows. You fall dead, stuck like a pin-cushion, as Sansas rubs his hand greedily together and strides towards the Mungies' Gold.

102

Each golden Quetzal tail feather will cause amazement amongst the Mungies. For every one that you give to a Mungie, five others will pursue it into the forest in an attempt to get hold of it (i.e. 6 Mungies in total will depart for every feather you give them).

If there are any Mungies left, you can now offer them something else. Turn to **88**. If there are none left, you can continue on your way (turn to **9**).

103

The Manticore prowls around the base of the tree, smelling the air and snarling in displeasure. If you have the Witch's poison, you may apply it to your sword, if you have not already used it (remember to *Test your Skill* to see whether you avoid poisoning yourself with this deadly toxin).

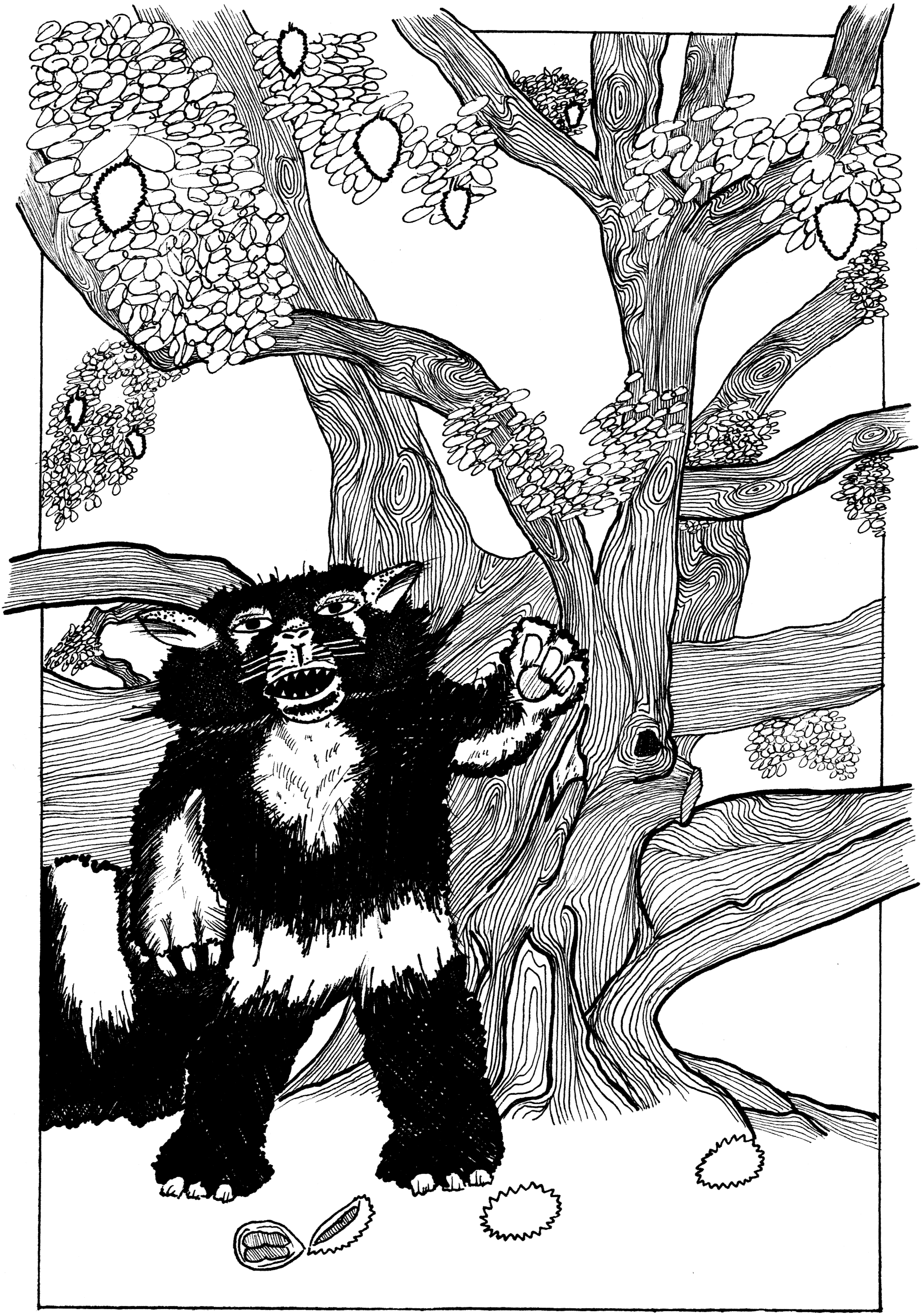
Suddenly the Manticore loses patience. With a roar, it charges at the tree, beating its enormous feathered wings to give it extra reach. In an explosion of claws, fangs and shattered wood, you are knocked from the tree, and fall over five metres to the ground. *Test your Luck*. If you are Unlucky, you are badly injured by the fall and lie on the ground, half conscious and groaning with pain, as the Manticore puts you out of your misery! Your adventure ends here. If you are Lucky, you fall painfully (lose 1 SKILL point and 3 STAMINA points), but you are not finished yet. As you scrabble to get to your feet, the Manticore attacks. Turn to **76**, deducting 1 point from your Attack Strength for the first round of the fight.

104

The crows were not the only creatures feeding on the carcasses. As you watch them rise, two disgusting HARPIES come screeching down from the sky, their ragged leather wings wafting their hideous stench before them. Claws stretched out towards you, they attack.

	SKILL	STAMINA
HARPY	7	6
HARPY	6	6

The Harpies attack you one at a time, in alternate attack rounds. If you have a lance, you may add 1 to your Attack Strength for this fight, as the longer weapon keeps the Harpies at bay more effectively. If you manage to kill one, the other shrieks in dismay and flies away. If you survive their attack, turn to **26**.



105

As you walk past the Black Elves, one of them shouts "Hey, stranger! You no want to talk to us?" You look over your shoulder and see that the three Elves have risen to their feet and are staring at you. Will you:

Ignore them and keep walking?	Turn to **34**.
Apologise to them and talk to them?	Turn to **184**.
Or attack them?	Turn to **78**.

106

Sansas and his two henchmen leap from their wreck onto your boat. With a wicked grin, Sansas whips a throwing-dagger out of his robe and jams it in Jilani's throat. As Jilani falls overboard, Sansas' two henchmen pull daggers from their own belts and, along with Sansas, attack you. You must fight them all at the same time.

	SKILL	STAMINA
HENCHMAN	8	9
HENCHMAN	9	8
SANSAS	11	14

If you beat them, turn to **192**.

107

The open nature of the forest means that you make good progress, and you feel that you have descended a long way towards the lake. In your eagerness to leave this cursed land behind you, you trip as your leg plunges down a hole. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, you have strained it slightly, but can keep moving (lose 2 STAMINA points). If you are Unlucky, you twist your knee badly, and howl in pain as you pull it from the hole and try to put your weight on it. Lose 1 SKILL point and 2 STAMINA points. Turn to **83**.

108

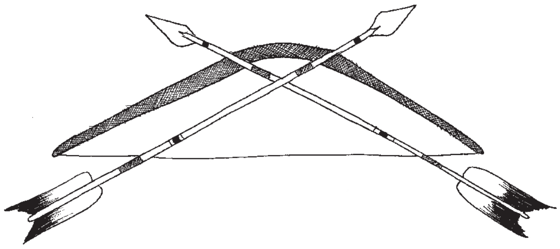
As you approach the base of the tree, the fallen leaves behind it explode, and an angry SKUNKBEAR rears up out of the undergrowth and growls threateningly. You have disturbed its feast! Do you want retreat and follow the path onwards (turn to **129**)? Alternatively you could throw the Skunkbear a Flying Fish in the hope that this distracts it (turn to **122**)? Or do you want to attack the Skunkbear (turn to **4**)?

109

You dispatch the Madman with a final blow. Lose 1 LUCK point for your cruel treatment of the unfortunate wretch. Turn to **140**.

110

The Witch waves her hand at you and mutters something incomprehensible. Suddenly your body contorts and your mind evaporates as you turn into a frog! Quickly the Witch grabs you and plops you into her steaming brew. Your adventure (and life) ends here.



111

The Shield Maidens eye you suspiciously, unsure of who they are dealing with. The blond leader shouts "Mavla!" and they all turn and disappear into the forest. Add 2 to your LUCK! Turn to **162**.

112

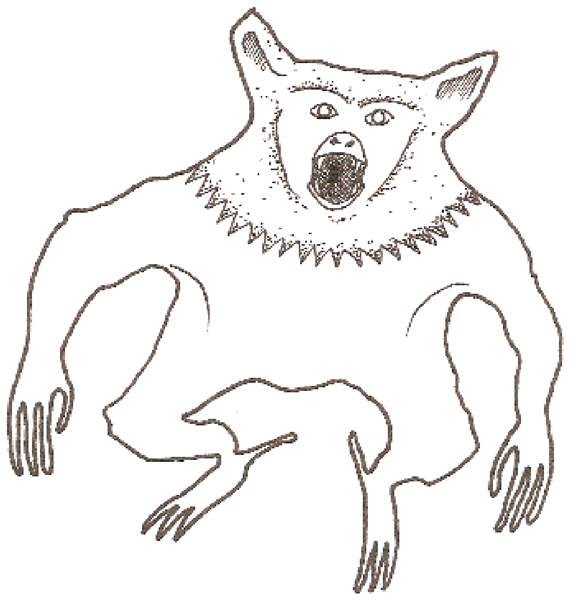
The Quetzal seems preoccupied with its preening, but this isn't going to be easy. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Sneak* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you fail, the Quetzal is disturbed, and squawks as it flies away (turn to **58**). If you succeed, you now have to grab a tail feather and pull it out. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Deftness* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you fail, the Quetzal is disturbed, and squawks as it flies away (turn to **58**). If you succeed, you manage to pluck a single feather from its tail (add 1 to your Luck). The Quetzal squawks loudly in alarm (add 1 to your DISTURBANCE) as it flies away. You carefully curl the dazzling tail feather up and stow it away, and carry on (turn to **58**).

113

The Champaque throws back its head and roars before attacking you with its teeth bared! You have no time to fire an arrow.

CHAMPAQUE SKILL 10 STAMINA 10

If you win, add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score and turn to **41**.



114

You scramble up the trunk of the Pango Tree, narrowly getting high enough to avoid the Manticore, as it lunges at you with its deadly claws. Add 1 to your LUCK. However, it is only a matter of time before the Manticore, which is prowling around the base of the tree, decides to use its wings to help it reach you. What do you want to do? If you want to remain where you are to see what happens, turn to **103**. If you wish to shoot an arrow at the Manticore (assuming you have a bow and arrow), turn to **15**. If you wish to leap onto the back of the Manticore in an all-or-nothing attempt to even the odds, turn to **42**.

115

Test your Luck. If you are Unlucky, turn to **63**. If you are Lucky, *Test your Skill* at -1, unless you have *Aim* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you fail, your arrow swishes past the Manticore's face, and it looks up angrily at you. Turn to **63**. If you succeed, the arrow strikes the Manticore on its back, and it rears up in pain (add 2 to your LUCK). If you end up fighting the Manticore, you should deduct 1 point from its SKILL and 3 points from its STAMINA.

Now will you wait in the tree to see what happens (turn to **103**), climb down from the tree to attack the Manticore (turn to **76**), attempt to jump onto the Manticore's back (turn to **42**), or fire another arrow (turn to **124**)?

116

The figurine causes a ruckus amongst the Mungies - a cacophony of shrieks and howls rises (add 1 to your DISTURBANCE) as the Mungies argue and fight among themselves. They become increasingly enraged and, worryingly, are joined by three more Mungies. Suddenly they turn on you with teeth bared! Turn to **190**.

117

This is one fight you want to avoid if you can! *Test your Skill*, at -1 if you do not have *Run* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1, as the Champaque is an extremely strong and fast creature. If you fail, you must fight it (turn to **113**). If you succeed, you outrun it. Add 1 to your LUCK and turn to **41**.

118

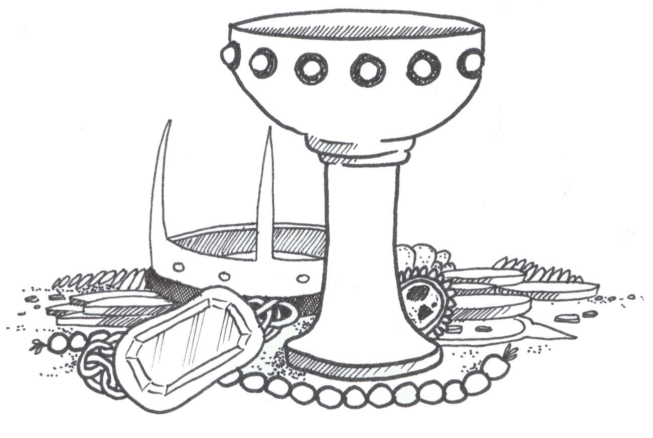
The Black Elves will take any one of the following:

> Your sword (if you have one). You must deduct 3 from your Attack Strength until you find a replacement.
> A Mungie figurine.
> 12 Gold Pieces (but no less).

If you do not wish to (or cannot) give them any of these items, you will have to fight them (turn to **78**). If you give them something they want, they jeer at you as you gather yourself and carry on along the path. Lose 2 LUCK points and add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score. Turn to **85**.

119

Roll 3 dice. Remember the total and turn to **45**.



120

Though stranded, the Flying Fish isn't going to give up without a fight – as you grab for it, it bites you in the hand (lose 1 STAMINA point). Finally you manage to dispatch the unwilling participant in your feast. Jilani gets the fish grill going while you clean the fish. He says that he has never eaten one and is interested in trying it out. The smell of the cooking fish is hardly appetising, but it is soon ready and you and Jilani tuck in. Rather disgusting, you both agree!

Unfortunately, you both soon discover that eating the Flying Fish was a bad idea. Within a few minutes of finishing your meal, you are both doubled over with stomach cramps, and spend the next couple of hours retching (and worse!) over the gunnels of the boat. Lose 1 die of STAMINA for your trouble. Eventually the effects of your meal subside and you continue on your way. You will know better next time! Turn to **194**.

121

The trail descend into a thickly wooded valley, where the air is humid and filled with buzzing insects. The light is beginning to fade as evening draws in. You get the feeling that eyes are peering out at you from the canopy above and the undergrowth on either side of the trail. *Test your Disturbance*. If you fail, roll on the Encounters Table and follow the instruction given.

The trail leads on through the forest, eventually coming to a fork. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Observation* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, turn to **38**. If you fail, you can either take the left fork (turn to **55**) or the right fork (turn to **93**).

122

The Skunbear hesitates for a minute, then picks up the Flying Fish in its jaws, and disappears into the undergrowth. This allows you to gather three Jubalani fruit, each of which counts as one meal. You need no longer worry about the Flying Fish spoiling your food. Turn to **129**.

123

The rocky path leads up along the south-western edge of a ridge of hills, zigzagging around outcrops and clefts. It is surrounded on both sides by thorny scrub and tangles of trees, although you occasionally get a panoramic view of the wild forests and high mountains to the left. The day is warm and the climb is hard work (lose 1 STAMINA point).

After several hours, the track loops into a cleft in the hills. The bushes open up, and you can see that it loops out of it again further on. You also see a thin trail of blue-grey smoke rising from near the path up ahead. Although you can't see the source of the smoke, you hear voices speaking in low tones in the same direction. Add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score.

Do you want to carry on along the path, towards the smoke and the voices (turn to **39**), or do you wish to leave the path and attempt to cut across the cleft, joining the trail further on, beyond the smoke and the voices (turn to **24**)?

124

Turn to **63**.

125

“That is incorrect,” says the Shield Maiden. They all tense, raising their lances and shields. Do you want to fight them (turn to **32**), or surrender (turn to **73**)?

126

You move to attack the robed man. He looks straight at you and says “Dhumbaji!” In the blink of an eye, he disappears in a puff of smoke. Mystified, and more than a little alarmed, you continue on your way. Turn to **18**.

127

As you walk through the forest in the morning cool, you hear, or think you hear, faint singing and laughing from the treetops above. You look up, squinting against the bright sky, which is visible through the lattice of branches and leaves, and jump as an acorn bounces off your forehead! This time you are sure you heard laughter from above. Suddenly lots more acorns come raining down, aimed with considerable accuracy at your head (lose 1 STAMINA point). Shielding your face with your hands, you look up to see where they are coming from and catch a glimpse of some ELVINS staring down gleefully at you. Do you want to ignore them (turn to **177**) or challenge them (turn to **147**)?

128

You emerge from the forest into a clearing. The moon is now high in the sky, and the clearing is flooded with its light. *Test your Disturbance*. If you fail, roll on the Encounter Table and follow the instructions given. If you succeed, or if you survive the encounter, you press on (turn to **83**).

129

The path leads on from the Jubalani Tree through the forest, which has changed in character somewhat - the trees are taller and allow more light through, and the ground is covered in clots of old brown leaves. You come to a fork in the trail, with paths leading onwards left and right. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Observation* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you are successful, turn to **66**. If you fail, do you wish to follow the left hand path (turn to **12**), or the right (turn to **191**)?

130

Banki Moon seems like the sort of fellow who might know anything, so you decide to give it a shot and ask him about the location of the Mungies’ Gold. “Ah hah!” he exclaims. “I spent some time among the Mungies, and they’ll not give that up in a hurry, I can tell you. In fact, you’ll never get near the gold if you don’t give them something precious first.” You ask him where you can find the Mungies’ Gold, and he says “Oh, they hoard it up there under Gandaki, a low foothill of the mountains with a bare rounded top”. Add 2 to your LUCK. Now you can either thank him and carry on your way (turn to **18**), or ask him about something else you have not already asked him about:

When was he last in Kharé?	Turn to **3**.
If you have some scrolls with an unknown script, what do they say?	Turn to **25**.
What dangers are there in the forest?	Turn to **178**.

131

You advance threateningly towards the Witch. “Ah now, don’t be at that!” she warns you. Do you still wish to attack her (turn to **110**), or will you apologise and talk to her (turn to **95**), or will you flee (turn to **33**)?

132

Roll 1 die. Remember the number rolled and turn to **168**.

133

Test your Disturbance. If you fail, turn to **72** (you do not need to roll on the Encounter Table in this instance). If you succeed, turn to **119**.

134

To find out more about the following purchases (but only do so if you have bought them), turn to the paragraph given:

Rope and grapple	Turn to **98**.
Ivory Mungie figurine	Turn to **59**.
Bow and/or quiver of arrows	Turn to **80**.

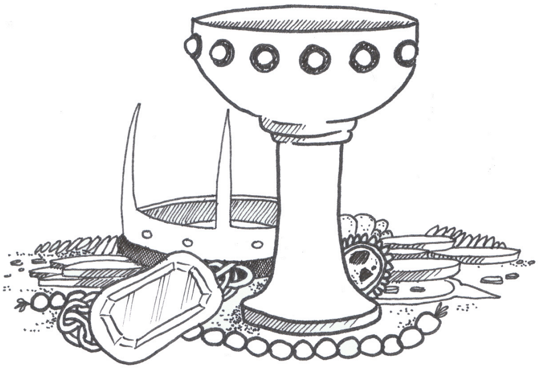
Once you have finished examining your purchases, you head down towards the docks. As you walk down towards the busy Lumlé Gate, you are surprised to see an old man, dressed in a wine-coloured robe with gold brocade, leading a MUNGIE on a rope of golden thread! The Mungie, which is wearing a hat with a tassel, is causing much amusement in the crowd, capering and dancing. Could it be an omen of your journey to come? *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **146**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **185**.

135

You are not quick enough. As you scramble up the trunk of the Pango Tree, grabbing twisted vines and the stumps of broken branches, the Manticore swats your backpack with one of its massive claws. You are knocked from the tree trunk and hit the ground with an umph (lose 1 STAMINA point). As you scrabble to get to your feet, the Manticore attacks. Turn to **76**, deducting 1 point from your Attack Strength for the first round of the fight.

136

The Fireflies flare up in alarm as you come near, but they do you no harm. You climb over some fallen logs and, as you jump off the other side, you sink to your knees in a sticky mire. You try as best you can to get out, but the more you struggle, the more the mud sucks you in. *Test your Skill*. If you succeed, you manage to grab hold of a trailing liana and haul yourself from the treacherous glaur (turn to **83**). If you fail, you remain stuck. The more you wiggle, the more stuck you become, until only your head remains above the mud. You must wait for starvation, rising water, or the predations of some cruel beast to end your suffering. Your adventure ends here.



137

Test your Skill, at -1 unless you have *Deftness* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, you manage to place the JIB-JIB (for that is what it is) on the moss without disturbing its sleep. Turn to **127**. If you fail, it awakes in alarm and lets out an almighty roar, the likes of which seems hardly possible from such a small creature, before racing off into the undergrowth screaming as if the world was going to end (add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score). All around you birds shriek, and other denizens of the canopy yelp and yammer. It's about time you departed this scene of disturbance before some more dangerous creature comes to investigate. Turn to **127**.

138

You return to the Witch's hut and she lets you in eagerly. You tell her that you have failed to find one of the frogs for her, and her face sours. It is not a pretty sight. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **173**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **62**.

139

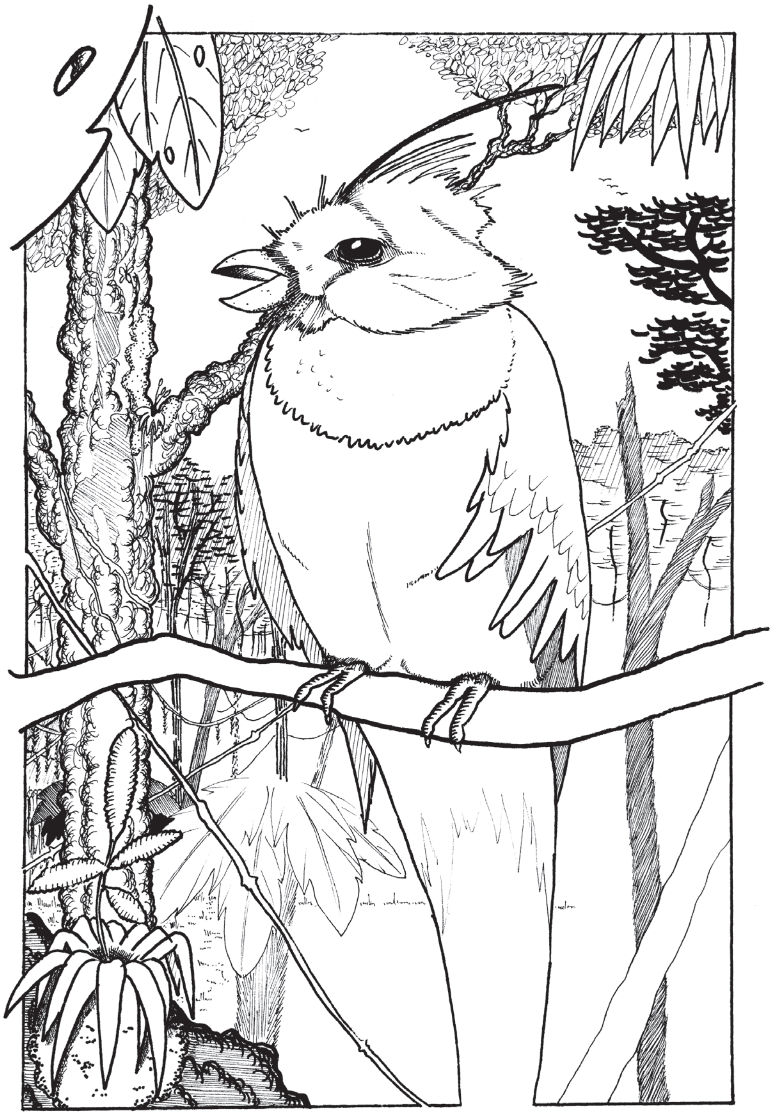
The Flying Fish, flopping around in the hull of the boat, puts up a bit of a fight, biting you in the hand (lose 1 STAMINA point) before you dispatch it. You wrap it in a boja leaf and stow it in your backpack. Unfortunately, this has the effect of turning all of your Provisions rancid and inedible, something you will discover when you next wish to eat a meal. You can then keep or discard the fish as you see fit. You won't be able to store any more Provisions in your backpack until you get rid of it. Turn to **194**.

140

Ahead of you lie the forested foothills of the Cloudcap Mountains. Two paths lead into these unknown lands which hide the gold you seek. The one to the right climbs up along the edge of a ridge of wooded hills; the one to the left leads into a thickly forested valley. Will you follow the right fork (turn to **123**) or the left one (turn to **14**)?

141

The man is angry that you have entered his home and have stolen his property. He waves his axe at you and demands that you return what you have taken. If you do not, he will attack you (turn to **164**). If you do, turn to **172**.

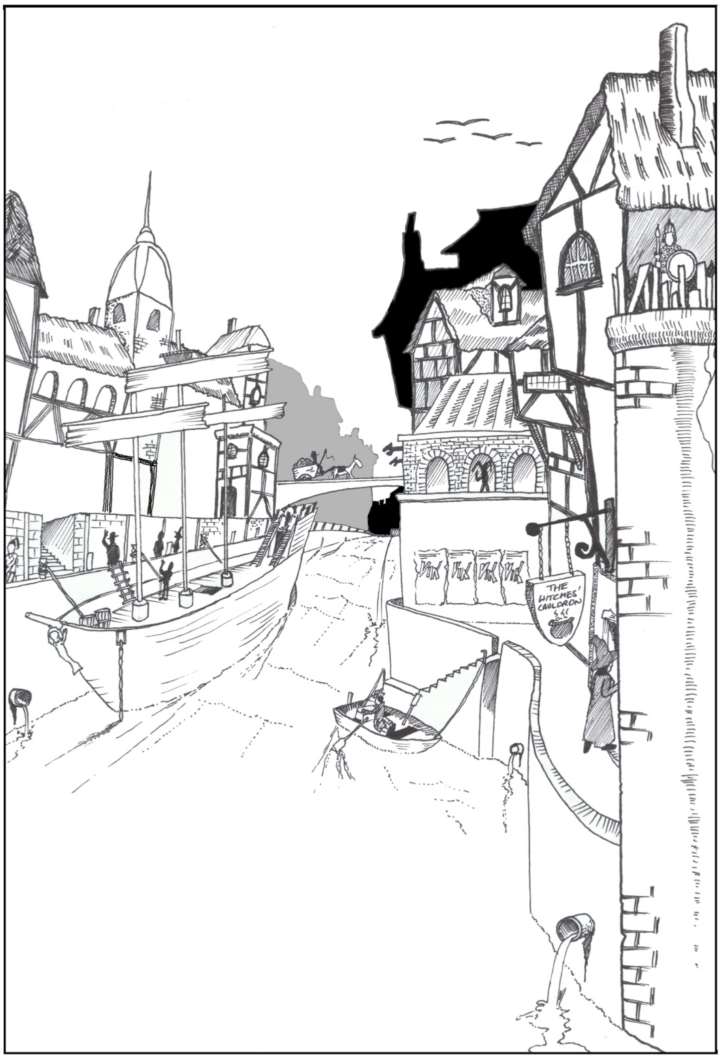


142

The trail you are following becomes increasingly muddy as it twists up the side of hill, and the going is tough (lose 1 Stamina point). Eventually it crests, and you get a magnificent view of the land ahead, which plunges down in verdant green jungle to a river valley before quickly climbing up to the towering foothills of the Cloudcap Mountains, jagged black and white against the bright blue sky. You follow the trail down hill and are stopped in your tracks when you see one of the most beautiful sights nature has to offer – a RESPLENDENT QUETZAL, a beautiful, brightly-coloured bird of the cloud forest with magnificent, long golden tail feathers. It is perched on a branch over the trail ahead, preening and puffing its feathers. The golden tail feathers of Resplendent Quetzals fetch enormous prices in the finest markets in Kharé. Do you want to try and get one (or more)? If so, turn to **50**. If not, you continue along the trail and Quetzal flies off with a squawk. Turn to **58**.

143

The scent gland bursts just as you thought you had worked it free from the surrounding flesh. You are splattered with the most foul-smelling pus imaginable. You must deduct 1 point from your SKILL until you have a bath. Also add 1 point to your DISTURBANCE score. Now turn to **129**.



144
You notice that behind some prickly bushes, another, narrower trail leads into the undergrowth. Do you wish to follow this trail (turn to **153**) or the other, bigger one (turn to **127**)?

145
You stride up to the Shield Maiden, whose eyes are glazed over and whose breath is weak and ragged, and end her misery. Searching her belongings, you find that she has a sword (which you can take, but you must leave your current weapon) and a shield. If you take the shield, it can protect you from damage in battle. When an opponent scores a hit on you, *Test your Skill*. If you succeed, you reduce the damage they do by 1 STAMINA point. If you fail, normal damage is inflicted. Finding nothing else of interest, you return to the trail and carry on with your search for the Mungies' Gold. Turn to **142**.

146
You arrive at the dock and find Jilani already in his boat making preparations in the bright morning sun. He is very cheery about your prospects, and soon you are passing out of the Lumlé Gate, up the long arm of Lake Lumlé that stretches down to Kharé to become the Jabaji River. It is not long before you are passing by the fishing villages of Chena Vala, with their strange fishing nets draped from wooden frames down into the waters. By noon you have entered the main expanse of Lake Lumlé, with the deep reed-beds of the Khiranti Marshes on your left and Kajagadu Point on your right. The rest of the day is spent crossing Lake Lumlé. As evening falls, Jilani points out the twin islands of Shanti and Nilgiri, which lie in the southern half of the lake. These uninhabited islands are used as a stopping post for the fishermen of the lake, and it is at Nilgiri that Jilani docks the boat for the night, frying some fish that he has caught through the day for your supper.

After a reasonable night's sleep in the boat, Jilani wakes you early before resuming the journey to the far shore of the lake. As you proceed, he becomes more and more jittery, as fishermen rarely venture this far west. Jilani chatters to you, telling you about the dangers of the lake and about rumours he has heard of the dangerous lands you are about to visit. Just as he is telling you a strange story about little birds which help travellers find their way through the forest, you see a strange shimmering on the water. Suddenly you realise it is a shoal of FLYING FISH, glinting in the morning light, and they are coming your way! You must fight them:

FLYING FISH SKILL 8 STAMINA 8

When you have fought three rounds, turn to **170**.

147
You shout up at the Elvins, telling them to leave you alone. A shower of acorns, fired hard and with considerable accuracy, bounce off your head (lose 1 STAMINA point). As you wave your arms and shout in exasperation, one of the tricksy creatures steals one of your possessions (cross off one item from your adventure sheet; each provision counts as one item, as does your money purse with all your gold in it; a bow counts as a single item, as does a quiver of arrows). Lose 1 LUCK point. The Elvins mock you, saying that you'll need to be a lot bigger and braver if you want to get the Mungies' Gold. They fire a few more acorns, half-heartedly, and leave you be. Add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score and turn to **18**.

148
The Witch gives you a vial to keep the frog in and directs you towards the trees where she believes it can be found. You find the trees and size one of them up for climbing. This isn't going to be an easy task. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Climb* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, you have managed to climb the tree (turn to **11**). If you fail, you cannot get up the slippery trunk for all your trying. You can either return to the Witch to tell her that you have failed (turn to **138**), or continue on your journey (turn to **160**).

149
You return to the Witch's hut and she lets you in eagerly. You give her the frog in the vial and she cackles in delight. She drops the small frog into a pestle and mortar, spits on it and crumbles some dried herbs on top, then grinds it vigorously into a paste. She carefully scrapes half of the paste into the vial and seals it before giving it to you. "This is a deadly poison, gold-seeker. Use it wisely by applying it to a blade." If you wish to use the poison at any point, you must apply it to a blade (e.g. a sword or an arrow head), and you must have done this at some point before the paragraph where you use the blade, as it is a fiddly process. When you do so, you must *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Deftness* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, you have applied the poison without harming yourself. If you fail, you

have also applied the poison, but you have got a small amount of it on your skin, and it acts quickly on you, reducing your SKILL by 1 point, and your STAMINA by 3 points. You only have enough poison for one application, and it will only affect the first opponent you strike with that blade. If you strike an opponent with the poisoned blade, it will immediately reduce their SKILL by 1 point, in addition to the normal 2 points of STAMINA damage. Your opponent will continue to lose 1 SKILL point and 2 STAMINA points in each subsequent Attack Round, regardless of whether you injure it or not (if you injure it, it suffers even more damage), until it is dead (whether or not you are alive to see this happen). Make a note of this paragraph number for reference in the rest of your adventure.

In addition to the poison, the Witch gives you 3 provisions, before sending you on your way. Add 1 to your LUCK, and turn to **160**.

150

The arrow strikes the Manticore on its flank, and it roars in pain, rolling on its side, scratching at the shaft with its hind claws (add 2 to your LUCK). If the arrow was poisoned, turn to **86**. If it was not, make a note that if you end up fighting the Manticore, you should deduct 1 point from its SKILL and 3 points from its STAMINA. Now you must decide what to do. Will you wait in the tree to see what happens (turn to **103**), attempt to jump onto the Manticore's back (turn to **42**), climb down from the tree to attack the Manticore (turn to **76**), or fire another arrow (turn to **115**)?

151

The forest at night is far from quiet. All manner of chirps, yelps, buzzes and cracks echo through the humid air, and many pairs of round, slow-blinking eyes stare at you from the undergrowth around the trail, which is becoming increasingly difficult to follow in the dark. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Observation* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, turn to **23**. If you fail, turn to **13**.

152

Have you taken anything from the cabin? If so, turn to **141**. If not, turn to **2**.

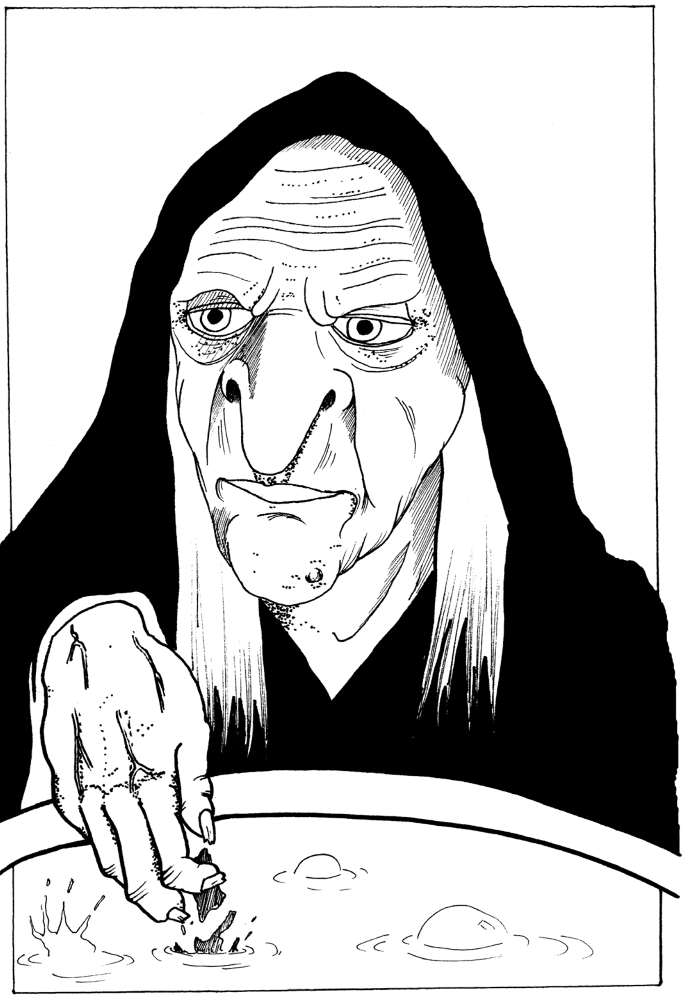
153

The narrow trail twists its way through the undergrowth, and at times it looks like it might disappear altogether, as you push vines, fronds and spiders webs out of your way. The ground underfoot is wet and sticky, and you are soon hot and bothered, and covered in stings, scratches and bites (lose 1 STAMINA point). You are just about to turn back towards the Witch's clearing when the path widens somewhat, and you almost bump into a robed man who is walking backwards, talking to himself. He spins round to face you and you see that he is an old man, dressed in a wine-coloured robe with gold brocade. If you think you have seen this man before, turn to **49**, otherwise read on.

Do you want to ignore the man and continue on your journey (turn to **18**), attack him (turn to **126**), or talk to him (turn to **57**)?

154

Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, turn to **85**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **34**.



155

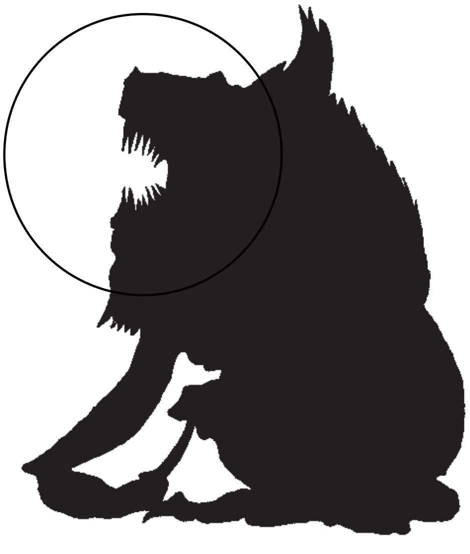
Although quite long because of its tail feathers, the Quetzal's body is not big, so this is not going to be easy. *Test your Skill* at -1, unless you have *Aim* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you fail, your arrow swished past the Quetzal, which squawks loudly in alarm (add 1 to your DISTURBANCE) and flies away. You have no choice but to carry on (turn to **58**). If you succeed, you skewer the Quetzal, and it falls dead on the trail below the branch – lose 1 Luck point for killing such a beautiful bird. You carefully pluck three long, dazzling tail feathers, which you curl up and stow away. Now you must carry on with your journey (turn to **58**).

156

You approach the hut cautiously and peer through the door. In the shadows of the interior, you see an old crone bent over a steaming cauldron. She is muttering to herself as she stirs the bubbling brew. Suddenly the WITCH turns around and stares at you with piercing eyes. Do you wish to attack her (turn to **131**), talk to her (turn to **187**), or flee (turn to **33**).

157

"Interesting..." says Sansas quietly, a smile playing on his lips. "But of course. You have, after all, saved me from the same fate. That I will not forget." The two henchmen cry out in alarm and, as their boat slips beneath the water, they jump into the lake and attempt to reach your boat. Jilani quickly manoeuvres away from their desperate thrashings, leaving them to their watery fate. Sansas stands staring at them with his impenetrable gaze, before turning to you with a grin on his face and saying "Half yours, half mine, Manticore slayer?" Even half of the Mungies' Gold must be worth thousands of gold pieces, so you reach out a hand and shake on it as Jilani sets sail towards Kharé and safety. Turn to **200**.



158

The frog jumps just as you gasp in surprise, and it leaps right into your mouth! With the most poisonous thing in the jungle stuck in your throat, you topple over and fall out of the tree. You are dead from its toxins before you hit the ground.

159

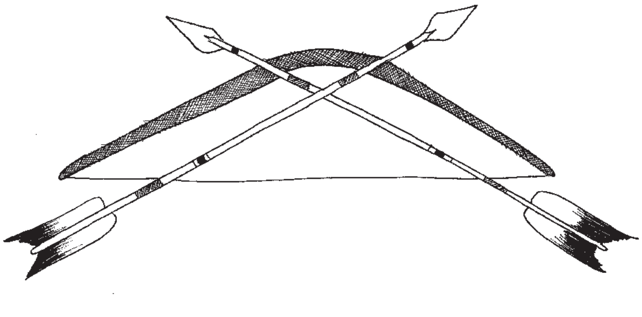
With nothing else to interest you here and with no other path to follow, you return to the fork and take the left-hand trail (turn to **12**).

160

There is only one way on from the Witch's clearing. *Test your Skill*, at -1 unless you have *Observation* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you fail, you follow the track from the clearing (turn to **127**). If you succeed, turn to **144**.

161

You struggle through the knots of hanging creepers for some time before you emerge into a more open forest of broad tree trunks and crunchy leaf litter. You notice that the ground is covered in dark bumps which at first glance look like sheep droppings but which you quickly realise are Janka Nuts. These nutritious nuts are best eaten roasted (and are a favourite snack on the streets of Kharé), but right now you'll settle for them raw – you quickly gather enough for a meal (add 3 points to your STAMINA). As you stand picking the last tasty nut crumbs from your teeth, you hear shuffling in the undergrowth to your right. Will you investigate (turn to **44**) or will you head in the opposite direction (turn to **107**)?



162

Glad to have escaped from the clutches of the Shield Maidens of Lumlé, you waste no time heading for the lake. You plunge down through thickets and dense undergrowth as the light of day spreads across the sky. Below, you can see the lake through the trees, but you have no idea where on its shore you will come out. You can make out what looks like a small jetty on the lake side, and with no better idea of where to start looking for Jilani, you head for that.

It is not long before you emerge from the forest onto the bare scrub-land around the lake's edge. As you walk towards the jetty, a cloud of crows rises noisily from the shore and you see that they have been feeding on the corpses of several men. Who they were, or how they died, you cannot tell, as the crows have been working on them for some time. Their weapons lie beside them – if you do not have one, you can use one of their swords.

Now *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **26**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **104**.

163

You bounce off the Manticore's back and hit the ground with an umph (lose 1 STAMINA point). As you scrabble to get to your feet, the Manticore attacks. Turn to **76**, deducting 1 point from your Attack Strength for the first round of the fight.

164

The Wood-cutter has survived for many years in the dangerous forests of Mauristatia and is a seasoned fighter. You have time to fire one arrow at him before he reaches you. His broad axe does 3 STAMINA points of damage (2 if you are Lucky, 4 if you are Unlucky).

WOOD-CUTTER	SKILL 9	STAMINA 10

If you defeat him, you may take his axe (but you must leave your sword behind; it will inflict 3 points of damage on opponents), and any of the items from his cabin. Turn to **159**.

165

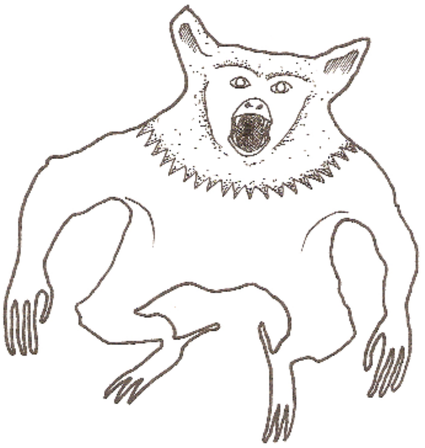
The trail twists through the rocks and undergrowth until it stops abruptly at a small cave mouth. On the rock face next to the cave, an all-seeing eye and a skull have been daubed in white lime. Do you wish to peer into the cave (turn to **167**) or do you wish to retrace your steps and take the other fork (turn to **121**)?

166

"Oh yes, these are dangerous lands," they tell you. They warn you in particular about the many great Apes that inhabit the area, particularly in the denser forests, and tell you to avoid at all costs the Shield Maidens of Lumlé, who don't take kindly to strangers in these lands. They fall silent and begin to stare at you. Feeling uncomfortable with their attentions, you make your apologies and leave. Turn to **154**.

167

You stoop and look into the cave mouth, but beyond the daylight you can see nothing. Suddenly someone raps you across the back with a sharp stick (lose 1 STAMINA point). You spin round to see a small, hairy man, naked but for a loin cloth, waving a sapling at you. "Be gone, intruder!" he fumes at you. Do you wish to leave, retracing your steps to the other fork in the trail (turn to **121**), do you wish to attack him (turn to **175**), or do you wish to try to talk to him (turn to **19**)?



168

The path climbs into a forest of pines and thickets of bamboo. Suddenly the silence of the forest around is broken by a violent howling, and a number of feline-like creatures come bounding out of the forest towards you – HOWL CATS. There are as many Howl Cats as the total you rolled in the previous paragraph. These lion-like apes are grey with ruddy manes, vicious fangs and deadly slashing claws. They attack you one at a time (each has SKILL 8, STAMINA 9), bounding up to you and snapping like creatures possessed. Before each Howl Cat attacks, it lets out a blood-curdling howl which knocks your confidence - you must reduce your Attack Strength by one for the first round of each fight. Each time you wound a Howl Cat, it will also howl, again lowering your Attack Strength by 1 for the next round of combat, but also reducing the Howl Cat's STAMINA by 1 point because of the effort involved in producing such a soul-shattering howl.

You can try to escape after each fight. To do this, *Test your Skill*, with a minus modifier equal to the number of Howl Cats still left alive, and with a +2 modifier if you have *Run* Special Skill. So if your SKILL is 9, and there are four Howl Cats left alive, you must roll 5 or under with two dice to escape, unless you have *Run* Special Skill, in which case you must roll 7 or under. If you succeed, you manage to escape back down the trail, but not before one of them manages to snap at the back of your legs as you flee (lose 2 STAMINA points). If you fail, you must fight another one, then you can try to escape again. And so on until you kill all of them, escape, or are dead. Once you escape, add 2 to your DISTURBANCDE score. You retrace your steps to the last fork and head toward the other hill. Turn to **133**.

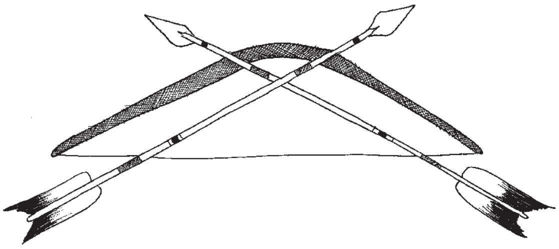
169

You hear a noise behind you and spin round to see a strong, bearded man advancing towards you with an axe in his hands. He challenges you, asking you what you are doing in his home. Will you attack him (turn to **164**), or will you try to talk to him (turn to **152**)?

170

The Flying Fish disperse and soar away from the boat. But one of them hasn't been so lucky – it has landed in the boat and is flapping around in the hull. Will you:

Attempt to release it over the side of the boat?	Turn to **189**.
Kill it and make a meal out of it for you and Jilani?	Turn to **120**.
Kill it and keep it for later use?	Turn to **139**.



171

"A gold seeker, eh? Do you people never learn? All the gold in the world will not make you happy, you know. The complete opposite more likely. Many a fool has come looking for it, but you'll get no help from me, I can tell you. Away with you, you vagabond! Old Vanati has no time for the likes of you!" With that, he grabs his stick and starts waving it at you. Do you wish to leave now (turn to **121**) or attack him (turn to **175**)?

172

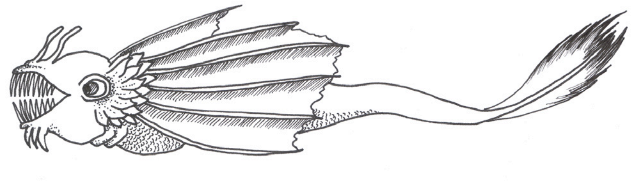
Test your Luck. If you are Unlucky, the man tells you to be gone. You can either do as he says, retracing your steps to the junction and taking the left-hand trail (turn to **12**), or you can attack him (turn to **164**). If you are Lucky, turn to **2**.

173

The Witch sneers at you and tells you to be gone. Will you leave now (turn to **160**), or attack her (turn to **110**)?

174

After a short while, the trail crosses the river via a large fallen tree-trunk. A narrow trail disappears into dense forest on the other side. The fallen tree-trunk is slick with slimy algae, making this crossing precarious. If you wish to track back and follow the trail upstream instead, turn to **193**. If you still wish to cross the tree-trunk bridge, *Test Your Skill* at -1, unless you have *Climb* Special Skill, in which case you should test it at +1. If you succeed, turn to **74**. If you fail, turn to **22**.

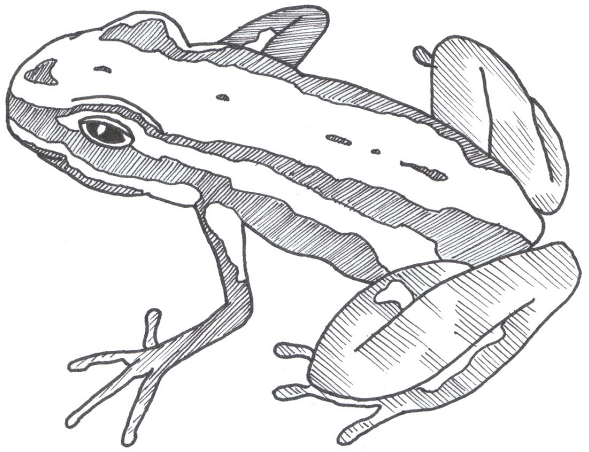


175

The old man mutters and blusters, waving the stick angrily at you as you attack.

OLD MAN SKILL 5 STAMINA 6

If you win, add 1 to your DISTURBANCE score. You investigate the cave, where you find little of interest other than 2 Provisions worth of food, a bone bracelet, and some scrolls with writing in a script you do not recognise. You can take anything you wish. Leaving the cave, you retrace your steps to the other fork in the trail. Turn to **121**.



176

Do you have a Mungie figurine, and are you willing to give it to the Mungies? If not, you must attempt to get past them – turn to **190**. If so, lose the LUCK bonus it gives you, and *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **20**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **116**.

177

The Elvins mock you, saying that you'll need to be a lot bigger and braver if you want to get the Mungies' Gold. They fire a few more acorns, half-heartedly, and leave you be. Turn to **18**.

178

"Oh, there are many dangers in the forest, not least the likes of you!" he says, chuckling. "When I first came to this forest, my, I had quite a time, I can tell you. But then I made friends with Chali, and since then I seem to have been getting on fine." You ask him who Chali is, and he says, "Chali? Oh now, you don't want to bother him. He's a great big Champaque, and he has eaten far more human brains than are good for him. I've taught him all sorts of tricks, and he has become quite the elocutionist. If ever you do happen to run into him, just repeat back to him what he says to you, as faithfully as possible, and he will leave you alone. Otherwise he'll try to eat your brains too!" You're not quite sure what to make of this, so you can now either wish him all the best and carry on your way (turn to **18**), or ask him about something else you have not already asked him about:

When was he last in Kharé?	Turn to **3**.
If you have some scrolls with an unknown script, what do they say?	Turn to **25**.
Where you might find the Mungies' Gold?	Turn to **130**.

179

Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, turn to **173**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **62**.

180

The market sells many things, most of them really only of use to the fishermen and traders who use the docks. But a number of stalls sell items which might be of interest to you. The following in particular catch your attention:

Garlic	1 Gold Piece per string
Rope and grapple	3 Gold Pieces
Ivory Mungie figurine	10 Gold Pieces
Bow	8 Gold Pieces
Quiver of six arrows	6 Gold Pieces
Dagger	8 Gold Pieces (you can use this instead of your sword if need be, but it will only inflict 1 STAMINA point of damage)
Skeleton key	5 Gold Pieces
Provisions	2 Gold Pieces each (you can buy up to five of these)
Potion of Skill	6 Gold Pieces (1 tot, restores SKILL to *Initial* level)
Potion of Health	6 Gold Pieces (1 tot, restores STAMINA to *Initial* level)
Potion of Fortune	6 Gold Pieces (1 tot, restores LUCK to *Initial* level)

Buy what you want (and can afford). Once you are done, turn to **134**.

181

You come to a small stream bubbling through the rocks. You rinse your hands in the ice-cold water and splash some on your face and neck before drinking a long draft (add 1 to your STAMINA). Refreshed, you press on. Will you follow the stream (turn to **83**) or will you keep to the thick forest (turn to **128**)?

182

All of a sudden the speaker drops down from the trees above to sit on the path just behind you. It is a large ape-like creature, with thick green fur, long, strong arms, and a face which is frighteningly human in aspect. It is a CHAMPAQUE, and it studies you intently. Do you know who Chali is? If so, turn to **196**. If not, do you want to attack it (turn to **113**), or run for your life (turn to **117**).

183

The shuffling and snuffling soon disappear. It takes a little while longer for you to drift off to sleep again, but eventually you do, and you sleep well (add 2 STAMINA points). You wake with the rising sun as the dappled light of day fills the forest. As you stir, you feel a warm weight on your belly. Glancing downwards in alarm you see that a round, furry object, for all the world like a curly brown wig, lies on your stomach. You almost jump out of your skin in alarm! Do you want to grab the furry creature and fling it off your belly in case it does you any harm (turn to **36**), or do you wish to carefully lift it and place it on the moss beside you to continue its slumber (turn to **137**)?

184

You join the Black Elves round the fire. You talk to them for a while, although they are not very forthcoming and their accents are a little difficult to understand. It seems that they are travelling to their home village, GaDeegi-Laay in the Bagmati Hills, after visiting relatives in the Tinpang Valley. As the conversation dries up, do you want to join them in a game of Knucklebones (turn to **195**), ask them about dangers in the area (turn to **166**), offer to trade some items (turn to **51**), or make your excuses and leave (turn to **154**)?

185

You don't realise it at the time, but the old man has trained the Mungie to steal from those around it, including you! Cross one item off your *Adventure Sheet*. Provisions or other food-stuffs don't count (the old man keeps the Mungie well fed), and your purse of gold counts as a single item, as does a quiver of arrows (although a bow is a separate item). Now turn to **146**.

186

You attempt to calm the Shield Maiden down, but she is frantic. She is so weak she cannot lift her sword to attack you, and she falls unconscious with the effort of trying. She has a nasty gash on her leg, which you bind with a torn piece of her cloak. When you are done, her eyes open again and she stares at you fiercely. Do you have any food to offer her? If you have any Provisions, and you wish to do give her one, turn to **46**. If not, there's not much more you can do for her. If you want, you can take her sword (if you have no weapon or if you leave your current weapon) and her shield. If you take the shield, it can protect you from damage in battle. When an opponent scores a hit on you, *Test your Skill*. If you succeed, you reduce the damage they do by 1 STAMINA point. If you fail, normal damage is inflicted. She grunts in protest as you return to the trail to carry on your search for the Mungies' Gold (turn to **142**).

187

The Witch rubs her hands on her apron and walks over to the door as you introduce yourself. "You'll be looking for the gold, no doubt," she says. You see no point in denying that, and she continues "And doubtless a bed for the night. 'Tis wise to look for shelter at night in these parts. But have you anything for me?" she asks. If you do not want to offer her anything to stay the night in her hut, you can either leave now (turn to **33**), or attack her (turn to **110**).

If you wish to offer her anything, she will accept any one of the following gladly:

Scrolls with an unknown script.
A Skunkbear's scent gland.
A Mungie figurine.

Alternatively, she will accept any *two* of the following items (but only *one* of each item, so you cannot offer her 10 Gold Pieces or two fruits):

5 Gold Pieces.
A Flying Fish.
A Skunkbear's paw.
A Jubalani fruit.
A bamboo flute.
A bone bracelet.

If you will not or cannot offer her any one of these, you can either leave now (turn to **33**), or attack her (turn to **110**). If you can and will, turn to **68**.

188

You do as Sansas requests, laying down your weapons and backpack. Assuming you were not without a weapon already, reduce your Attack Strength by 3 in all subsequent combats until such times as you get a new one. Also remove all belongings, including gold and Provisions, from your *Adventure Sheet*.

Sansas and his men advance towards you. Two bare-chested, burly side-kicks grab you by your arms. Momentarily taking his gaze from the Mungies' Gold, Sansas looks at you and says to his men, "Kill this brave fool." The two stooges holding you grab you tight as another of Sansas' men prepares to dispatch you with his sword. "Say your prayers," he tells you, as he raises the blade against the evening sky. Turn to **70**.

189

The Flying Fish is flopping about wildly in the hull and it is difficult to get a grip on it. As you try, it bites your hand (lose 1 STAMINA point). Finally you manage to evict the unwanted passenger, and it splashes into the dark waters of the lake. Turn to **194**.

190

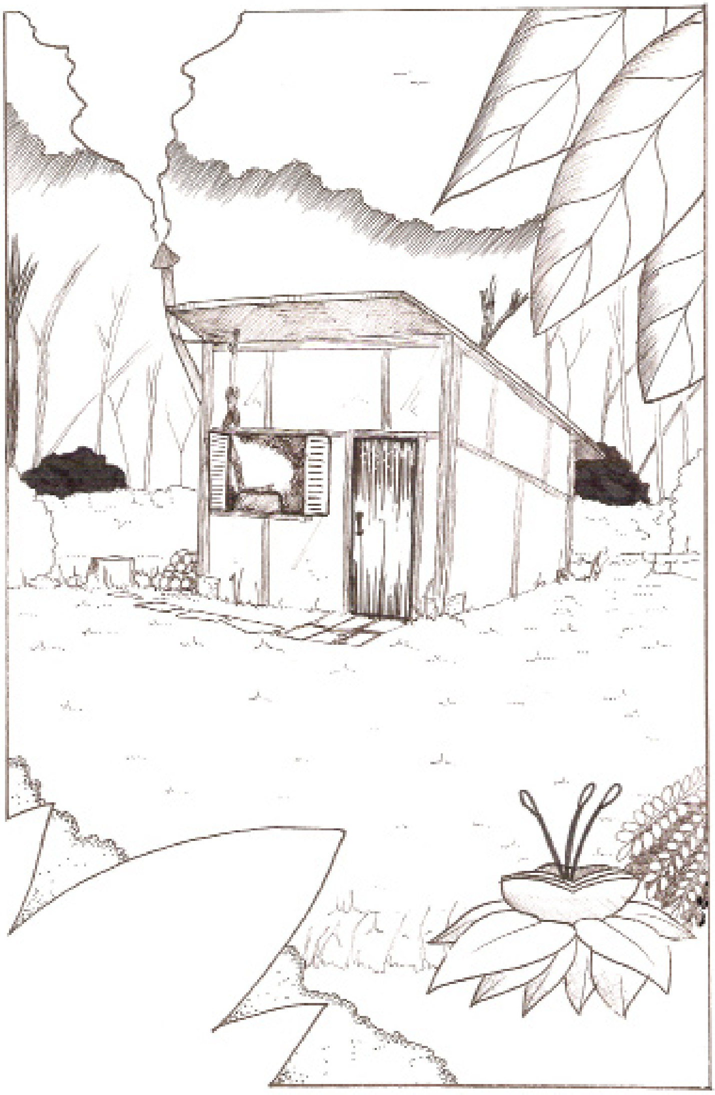
The Mungies fly into a rage at this intrusion into their lands and, with teeth and claws bared, they attack. You must fight all remaining Mungies at the same time.

Each MUNGIE	SKILL 6	STAMINA 4

If you manage to defeat them, add 2 to your DISTURBANCE score. You can now continue on your way. Turn to **9**.

191

You follow the track along the edge of a moss-covered bank. After a short while it comes to a clearing, in the middle of which stands a log cabin. There is a pile of logs, some chopped, some not, and a number of animal hides are stretched out in the sun to dry beside the cabin. A thin wisp of smoke curls out of a chimney which juts out of one of the walls. The door of the cabin is open. Do you wish to look through the door into the cabin (turn to **90**), retrace your steps back to the other



path (turn to **12**), or call out in the hope of catching someone's attention (turn to **69**)?

192

The last of your opponents slumps dead at your feet. As he does, you look up to see the wreck of Sansas' boat and the Mungies' Gold slip beneath the blood-stained waters of Lake Lumlé. You are left drifting alone in silence in your boat, fighting a rising tide of despair. Although you have survived your search for the Mungies' Gold, you are now empty handed. It shouldn't be beyond your capabilities to figure out how to sail the boat back to Kharé, and when you get back to the cityport you will no doubt feel thankful that you got away with your life.

193

The trail follows the small river upstream for a short distance before climbing upwards a little to run parallel to it. The forest closes in around the trail, creating a tunnel of shadowy green. As you walk through this dream-like environment, you are surprised when someone speaks just up ahead. "How are yooo today?" the unseen speaker asks in a rather curious accent. "What a byoootiful day. Very nice-ah, yes. Yes indeeed," it continues. Do you want to stop and listen (turn to **96**), or ignore the voice and continue on (turn to **31**).

194

After a few hours, the northwest coast of Lake Lumlé comes into view. It is fringed with reeds which grow up out of thick, scum-covered mud. As far as Jilani can tell, there is no obvious place to dock, so he brings the boat as near to the shore as possible, and suggests that you will have to wade the rest of the way to the shore. Not the most enticing of prospects, but it looks like you have no choice. Jilani agrees to wait in the same place off shore for up to five days. He intends to spend the time fishing. He wishes you good luck as you jump over the side of the boat into the reeds and mud.

Where you sink up to your waist in thick, stinking goo. What a way to start your journey into the unknown jungles of eastern Mauristatia! Jilani can't help but laugh as he throws you a rope from the boat to allow you to haul yourself out. *Test your Luck*. If you are Unlucky, turn to **75**. If you are Lucky, turn to **97**.

195

Knucklebones is a simple dice game. Each player must place a stake of 2 Gold Pieces and roll two dice (if you have no gold, you must make your apologies and leave – turn to **34**). The player with the highest score wins. You can play up to four games before the Elves get bored (you must roll dice for them too). When you have had enough, you can ask them about dangers in the area (turn to **166**), or make your apologies and leave (turn to **154**).

196

What was it Banki Moon said about Chali the Champaque? If you repeat his words back to him, he will leave you alone. This you do, even trying to put on a bit of the creature's accent for good measure. The Champaque stares at you thoughtfully, picking its nose as it does. Then it yawns widely, baring its long yellow fangs, scratches its rear end, and lopes off into the undergrowth. Add 1 to your LUCK and turn to **41**.

197

You just about manage to stay on the Manticore's back. What will you do now? Will you attempt to turn around so that you are facing the right direction (turn to **100**), or attempt to stab it in the spine with your sword (turn to **7**)?

198

You try to talk to the Shield Maidens, but you don't speak their language and they don't speak much of yours. As you try to speak to them, two more Shield Maidens join them, and one of these speaks more of your language. "What are you doing in our lands? Do you have the password?" she asks in a strong accent. If you think you know the password, turn to **27**. If you do not know the password, do you wish to attack them (turn to **32**), or surrender (turn to **73**)?

199

"That is incorrect," says the Shield Maiden. They all tense, raising their lances and shields. Do you want to fight them (turn to **32**), or surrender (turn to **73**)?

200

As evening falls, you spot the cityport in the distance, its miasma dark against the sky and its purple limestone walls turned red by the setting sun. You have not only survived your search for the Mungies' Gold and rescued the First Noble of Kharé from a watery grave, but have also returned with riches beyond your wildest dreams!

THE FACT OF FICTION

フィクションの事実

"The Fact of Fiction" is a series of articles designed to take a deeper look at the information presented in a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook, whether it be in-jokes, goofs, continuity with other gamebooks, the background to the creation of the book, or similar things. In many ways it is to act like a DVD commentary for the book, telling you things that you might not have already known.

鬼は待つ! **Alexander Ballingall** gets the nod from the Shogun to retrieve the singing sword from deep within the Pit. A guidebook to Japan might just prove handy...

Cover

- The Japanese 'ideograms' (what are known as (漢字) *kanji*) written on the battle standard of the undead samurai, (悪死) *akushi*, can be simply translated as 'evil death', as it is later done so when it reappears in an internal illustration (see "Background" for samurai and 82 for further detail).

Title Page

- The gamebook *Sword of the Samurai* first gets a mention in the "Omens and Auguries" news section of *Warlock* #8 (January 1986), although at that stage it was still unclear if the book that eventually followed it, *Trial of Champions* (Ian Livingstone, 1986), would be published first as gamebook #20. This is backed up by an early 1986 reprinting of *The Citadel of Chaos* (17th impression) that does list *Trial of Champions* as number twenty (see the opposite page). This suggests a fairly quick turnaround for the book as it is not mentioned at all in the previous issue of *Warlock* (#7, November 1985), despite other 1986 titles *Demons of the Deep*, *Trial of Champions*, *Robot Commando*, *Creature of Havoc* and the two-player *Clash of the Princes* being either name-checked or hinted at (only *Masks of Mayhem* eventually published towards the end of 1986 doesn't rate a mention!). The ISBN number of the book does give further credence to a possible late commission for the title. *Sword of the Samurai* would eventually be released in April and *Trial of Champions* in June.
- The writers, Mark Smith and Jamie Thomson, had already previously demonstrated an interest in Japanese history and culture, as at the time *Sword of the Samurai* was published they had already begun publishing their *The Way of the Tiger* gamebook series, in which the player is a ninja (1985~87).
- The subject matter of the gamebook is also a reflection of the West's interest in Japan that grew throughout the Eighties and was a result of the powerhouse nature of that country's economy prior to the 1989 asset price crash. This interest was reflected in the growing number of Japanese *anime* (アニメ) or 'cartoon' shows that began to appear on US and other Western televisions (albeit many in edited forms far removed from their original Japanese version – *Battle of the Planets* (1978~85) is one such example from the period), as well as the number of films which began to be set or partly-set in Japan or make use of Japanese culture, such as *The Challenge* (1982), *The Karate Kid* (1984) and its sequels, *Black Rain* (1989), as well as the television

Moichi's face falls when you tell him, but then he says, 'Well, my lord, I suppose that is the honourable thing to do...'

As this series of articles has demonstrated already, the writers of the *Fighting Fantasy* range are quite happy to plunder a variety of things in order to help give depth to their gamebooks and prevent them from being a mindless hack-n'-slash. But while Andrew Chapman may have spiced one book with a selection of names taken from the ancient lands of the Middle-East and Jonathan Green might grace the characters in another book with names that match the theme of the tale, it is not often that a gamebook plunders from solely one culture to inform almost all facets of the adventure.

Sword of the Samurai is one of those rare occasions then, being an immersion in the culture, folklore and societal structure of a period of Japanese history, one during which the major feuding samurai clans fought repeatedly for control of the country. Yet despite the fact that some of the harsh realities of life during that period are presented in the gamebook (such as seppuku – see 99), *Sword of the Samurai* is still a reflection of the somewhat idealised and rose-tinted view of the samurai and Japan that pervaded much of western media in the Eighties (see "Title Page").

Despite this fact, and the humour with which it has been read by Japanese *Fighting Fantasy* fans since its publication in 1986, *Sword of the Samurai* was probably among the first even vaguely detailed encounters with the culture of Japan that many English speaking children had, and has proven to be a solid, if occassionally inaccurate or unintentionally amusing, introduction to Japan.

どうも有難う御座いました。

16. SEAS OF BLOOD
17. APPOINTMENT WITH F.E.A.R.
18. REBEL PLANET
19. DEMONS OF THE DEEP
20. TRIAL OF CHAMPIONS

mini-series *Shogun* (1980).

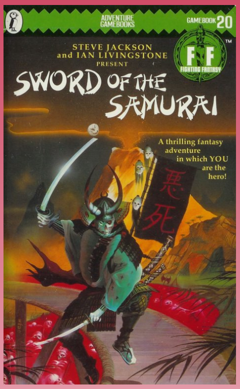
Special Rules

- This would be the first gamebook in the range to present players with a selection of "Special Skills" based on real-life skills, as opposed to the superhero skills that were presented in *Appointment with F.E.A.R.* (see "The Fact of Fiction" in issue #1).
- (弓術) *Kyujutsu* ('bow art') is the traditional art of wielding a bow and was a symbol of the professional warrior in Japan for the period of c.1185~c.1568. While schools for the teaching of the art had been formed by the 14th Century, in the 16th the introduction of firearms led to decline in focus on bow skills.
- (居合術) *Iaijutsu* ('mental presence and immediate reaction art') is the art of drawing a sword, of which (林崎甚助)* Hayashizaki Jinsuke (c.1546~c.1621) is considered a major exponent of the art through the founding of over 200 schools based on swordsmanship. The art was devised not for use on the battlefield but in everyday situations, hence it has techniques for attacking from various traditional sitting positions and many of the moves work on the assumption that the opponent is without armour.
- (軽身術) *Karumijutsu* ('light body art') was an art designed to help a practitioner of (拳法) *kenpo*, a term generally used by the Japanese to refer to Chinese martial arts, to lift their spiritual nature a higher level. This would be outwardly manifested by their ability to moved with a lightened body movement. Here in *Sword of the Samurai* it has become "Heroic Leaping", an ability to leap large heights or distances.
- (二刀剣術) *Ni-to-Kenjutsu* ('two sword art') is the pairing of a (刀) *katana* ('long sword') and a (脇差) *wakizashi* ('short sword') in combat (see 1). The most famous exponent of this style of combat was (宮本武蔵) Miyamoto Musashi (c.1584~1645) who advocated it in his book (「五輪書」) *The Book of Five Rings* (c.1645) as a means of dealing with multiple opponents (see 176 for further information).
- HONOUR as a game stat is in reference to (武士道) *bushido* (a concept name-checked in the "Background") which is roughly translated as the 'way of the warrior'. This was the samurai code of conduct and initially developed through various periods of feuding between Japanese clans, before parts of it became enshrined in law when the samurai moved to a more peace-keeping role during the (徳川幕府) *Tokugawa bakufu* ('Tokugawa shogunate'). This code was guided by the seven main virtues of Rectitude (義), Courage (勇), Benevolence (仁), Respect (礼), Honesty (誠 or 信), Honour (誉), and Loyalty (忠). Failing to hold to these ideals meant that a samurai had failed and could only redeem themselves by performing (切腹) *seppuku* (ritual suicide, see 99).

Background

- As pointed out in issue #1, in the article "Can't Find Gundobad on a Map? Maybe We can Help...", the world of Titan must have been in the preparation stages when *Sword of the Samurai* was edited for publication as the "Background" section opens with the first definitive grouping of the Old World, Allansia, and Khul on the same planet, although at this stage the Old World is still referred to in its entirety as Kakhabad (later just a region of the Old World).
- Until *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* later the same year retroactively placed the events of *Scorpion Swamp* (Steve Jackson (US), 1984) and *Seas of Blood* (Andrew Chapman, 1985) within Khul, this was the first gamebook to be explicitly set on the Dark Continent.
- Hachiman derives its name from the Shinto god of war, (八幡神) *hachiman-shin* ('god of eight banners'), who, as Buddhism overtook Japan, became included in the Buddhist pantheon in the 8th Century. It had been previously established that there was something akin to Japanese culture on Titan through the appearance of a lone ninja as a contestant in "The Walk" in *Deathtrap Dungeon* (Livingstone, 1984). In the Japanese editions of the gamebook (of which there are *three different* translations!), Hachiman is generally rendered as (八幡国) *hachimankoku* or 'Hachiman country'. This makes it the country of eight banners.
- Hachiman, as eventually depicted in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*, is shown to be a part of the mainland of Khul, while on the same map artist Steve Luxton drew some islands off the coast of Hachiman that look vaguely similar in shape to the islands of Japan. Perhaps Luxton was intending them to be considered a part of Hachiman along with the Japanese-named Yotakami Island (possibly 与太神 or 'nonsense god'). Luxton even went as far as labelling them the Isles of the Dawn, which is fairly close to the well-known name "Land of the Rising Sun" given to Japan (as based on the name of the country (日本) *nihon* which literally means 'sun root' or 'root of the sun'). As a reaction to this, writer Paul Mason deliberately made the Isles of the Dawn sprinkled in Chinese culture for *Black Vein Prophecy* (Paul Mason & Steve Williams, 1990) despite the efforts of his co-writer to ignore it, inverting the locations of the two cultures as they appear on Earth (China on the mainland and Japan as the islands).
- The capital city Konichi, like all Japanese names or terms in the gamebook, is rendered in romanji (the modern Roman alphabet), which renders obtaining meanings difficult due to the large number of homonyms in the Japanese language. The most likely definition would be (今市) or literally 'now city'. Interestingly, in the Japanese

Further 尚 Information 報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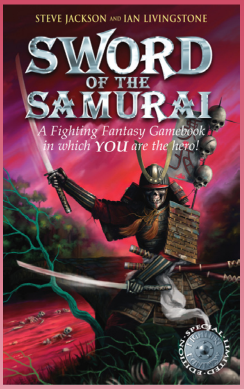
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A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!
SPECIAL EDITION

AUTHORS: MARK SMITH & JAMIE THOMSON
INTERIOR ARTIST: ALAN LANGFORD
PUBLISHED: APRIL 24 1986
PUBLISHER: PUFFIN
GAMEBOOK NUMBER: 20
COVER ARTIST: PETER ANDREW JONES
REPUBLISHED: JUNE 1 2006
PUBLISHER: WIZARD
GAMEBOOK NUMBER: 25
COVER ARTIST: MEL GRANT
AVAILABILITY: IN PRINT.

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* Throughout this article Japanese names will be rendered in the traditional style of family name first, given name second.

editions of the gamebook (of which there are three, the first two being books and the third the mobile phone version), the first goes for the above translation, the third cheats by using (カタカナ) *katakana*, the Japanese system of syllables used for foreign loan words, while the second opts for (紺壱) *koniti* or 'dark blue one'!

- With Hasekawa Kihei, at a best guess the character's name would be written 波線川騎兵, which means 'wavy line river' and 'cavalry' respectively for family and given names. But as with the two previous Japanese names, the Japanese editions present a variety of alternative choices to the above possibility. The first option is (長谷川喜平) which appears to mean 'long valley river' and 'happy flat', the second (馳皮奇兵) weirdly reads 'run skin' and 'odd soldier', and the third translation cheats once more with katakana.
- A *shogun* (将軍), literally 'a commander of a force', was at first simply the title given to military commanders for the duration of a campaign. During the 12th Century various feudal estates warred for control of the country and by 1192 the first of three shogunates to control Japan was installed into power. The line of Shogun as rulers of Japan came to an end with the (明治維新) Meiji Restoration, which took place in 1867.

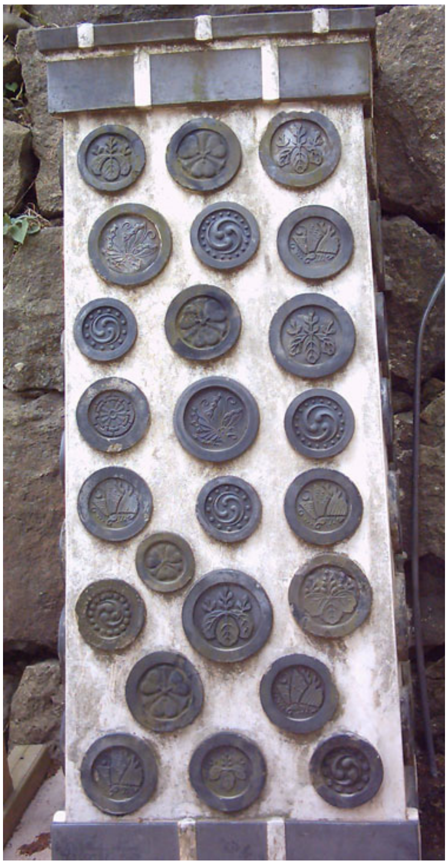

Photo of mon at Himeji Castle: © Pogo747, 2010 Used under Public Domain rights

- *samurai* (侍), 'those who serve in close attendance to the nobility', were originally created as part of an attempt during the 8th Century to create a national conscription along the line of that observed in China. Those conscripted who fell into the bottom half of the ranks were the "samurai" and were expected to deal with day-to-day matters. At this stage however they were akin to civilian public servants, the term samurai not being associated with military upper classes till later. While the conscripted army was dismissed, those in the upper ranks had already begun to accumulate wealth and power, forming the beginnings of the powerful feudal clans that would later vie for control of the country during the shogunates.
- *kensei* (剣聖), literally 'sword saint', was an honorary title given to those who were considered to possess exceptional skill with a sword that also includes a degree of moral greatness as well. Miyamoto Musashi (see "Special Rules") is considered by some to be deserving of this title.
- *kenjutsu* (剣術) or 'sword art' is the term used for the Japanese sword arts that predate the Meiji Restoration, after which point they evolved into the modern sport of (剣道) *kendo* ('way of the sword').
- Dai-katana (大刀) is in many cases simply rendered as "big sword", but actually refers either to a different type of sword or means of carrying said different weapon, known as a "tachi" (太刀).
- Singing sword here presumably refers to a well made blade that makes a ringing sound when tapped, a sign that the hilt, pommel and handle are fitted tightly and thus do not dampen the vibrations. A blade with cracks in it, however small, produces a dulled ring.
- *ikiru* is most likely rendered as 鋳切る, which translates roughly as 'cast (metal) cutting'.
- *onikaru* is listed as being the 'Pit of Demons' in the gamebook, but that would be written as 鬼のピット (*oni no pitto*). Obviously the loanword "pit" wasn't foreign enough for the writers, leading them to *onikaru* (鬼かる) for which the most likely meaning is 'demon hunt'.
- Bakemono-sho comes from (化け物) *bakemono* which is usually translated as 'goblin', although it refers to a class of (妖怪) *yokai* that are closer to a supernatural creature which has taken on a temporary transformation.
- Shikome derives from *yomotsu-shikome* (黄泉醜女) or 'ugly women of Yomi' (黄泉 *yomi* translated as 'the underworld') and prove quite a variance between their Japanese folklore description and the depiction in *Sword of the Samurai*. According to the Japanese myths they appear as young women and if angered reveal their true visage, that of old demonic women. In contrast the gamebook describes them as "hairy as apes, and with claws, fangs and horrible snouted faces ... dressed in imitations of Samurai armour" (see the illustration accompanying 136), a description closer to that of the *oni* (鬼) of Japanese folklore.
- Shura, also known as *ashura* (阿修羅), were a borrowing from Buddhism and were the lowest ranked of the deities. They were beings addicted to human passions such as wrath and pride, and were believed to also reflect a human being obsessed with violence and be unable to maintain their calm or solve problems peaceably.
- Cherry blossoms or (桜) *sakura* have a place of importance in Japanese culture and their flowering at the start of spring has given made them a metaphor for the ephemeral nature of life. One feature of this importance is (花見) *hanami* or 'flower viewing', a borrowing from China that developed in Japan between the 8th and 12th Centuries, which is followed today. Friends and family will gather at local parks, temples, and shrines to hold viewing parties (or picnics) and the flowering of the trees up the country as spring approaches is followed closely in the weather reports of television news.
- *senki* is most likely rendered as 戦気 to meet the translation in the gamebook of 'war spirit', although that would be better rendered as (戦争の精神) *sensou no seishin*.
- *kami* (神) refers to the 'spirits' and 'natural forces' that are part of the Shinto faith, closer to the Roman concept of *numen* (spirits within natural objects) than any sense of individualistic gods. Despite what the "Background" may suggest here, kami were present in the surroundings of nature and not in any form of heaven or hell.
- *hotei* (布袋), known in English speaking countries as the 'Fat Buddha', is considered in Japan to be one of the seven lucky gods of Taoism.
- The seal given here would be a (紋) *mon*, a heraldic symbol believed to have originally been devised for clothing as a means of signifying clan membership (see above photo of a selection of mon).

1

Gathering their weapons, the hero leaves Konichi and heads into the countryside.

- The katana was developed during the (室町時代) Muromachi period (1392~1573) in response to changing battle conditions that required samurai to be able to strike faster and sooner. To that end the katana was devised with the cutting blade facing upwards to allow a user to draw and strike with one movement (see "Special Rules").

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- The wakizashi was a smaller sword than the katana and was mainly used as a back up weapon in combat, a means of dispatching defeated enemies, or the means to committing suicide (see 99).
- Hagakure Bridge has an appropriate title, (葉隠れ) *hagakure* meaning 'hiding in the leaves', hidden as it is by the Forest of Shadows.
- Shios'ii Mountains is something of a difficult name to understand, Japanese render in romanji not making use of apostrophes as done here. Understandably the Japanese translations of the gamebook attempt to pattern the name after their standard syllables (the reverse is usually known as Anglicization and an example would be (人力車) *jinrikisha* which was modified to 'rickshaw' to better fit English pronunciation). As now standard procedure, the third edition goes straight for katakana again (with *shiosu ii*), the first version goes with (処水) *chosui* or 'water place', and the second translation fixes on (寿司牡胃) *sushiosui* or the very odd 'sushi male stomach'.
- *mizokumo* would be (溝蜘蛛) directly in Japanese, literally 'ditch spiders', which makes the later translation in the gamebook (at 295) as the 'Spider Fens of Kumo' even stranger as that would become the 'Spider Fens of Spiders'! It probably should read (蜘蛛の沼) *kumo no numa* or 'swamp of spiders'.

2
The Tatsu asks the hero the first riddle and waits in anticipation of failure.

- The riddle presented here is of English origin and of such long standing that no origin is known. The choice of subject matter for the riddle may have been influenced by *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* (1937) by J.R.R. Tolkien (1892~1973) in which a different riddle with the same answer is asked.
- *tatsu* (龍) is 'dragon' in Japanese, most of which were water deities associated with the rain, sea, or other bodies of water. Unlike European Dragons which are depicted as giant winged lizards, Asian Dragon are illustrated as being built more like giant winged snakes.

4
Escaping from the guards leads the hero into a dark tunnel within which apparently lives the Mukade.

- *mukade* (百足 although usually written as ムカデ) literally means 'one hundred feet' (see "The Fact of Fiction" from issue #2 for more on centipedes).

8
The hero is spirited away to the Tourney of the Planes to do battle.

- *dai-oni* (大鬼) is 'big demon', which can be read as the gamebook does 'greater demon'.
- Tourney means to simply 'compete in a tournament'.

9
Running from the village, the hero escapes from the creatures infesting the village.

- *rokurokubi* (轆轤首) is a well known error of the book, the monsters from Japanese folklore presented here being *nukekubi* (抜首). The difference between the two is that rokurokubi do not have detachable heads, but instead are able to stretch their necks for great lengths. In addition rokurokubi are more mischievous and take great delight in scaring humans, whereas the nukekubi see humans as prey. This is in some ways an understandable error, repeating as it does the mistake of Patrick Lafcadio Hearn (1850~1904) from his book *Kwaidan: Stories and Studies of Strange Things* (1903). This was a collection of Japanese ghost stories and like his other books was an important look into the culture of preindustrial Japan. His books in essence brought Japanese culture to the West for the first time in an easy to digest form, making them a much used reference source for Westerners writing about Japan.

10
There is smoke on the horizon suggesting raiders within the lands of Lord Tsietsin.

- Tsietsin, like Shios'ii (see 1), is a word not of Japanese construction. We can skip the third edition and it's use of katakana to try and match the sound of the name and focus on the first two translations. The first (貞信公) *teisin* means 'upright public trust', which is an amusing contrast with the true nature of this character, while the second opts for (津江鎮公) *suetin* or 'port bay peace'.

13
The hero is pressed into battle against three Kappa who attack all at once.

- *kappa* (河童) are a type of water sprite, akin to the Scottish kelpie, from Japanese folklore. Generally seen as tricksters, they were also believed to eat humans – especially children. They have been usually depicted as child-sized monkeys or frogs with a bowl as part of the top of their head. This bowl would be filled with water and should it be tipped out the kappa in question would be unable to move till the bowl was refilled. If a human refilled the bowl it was believed that the kappa would then have to serve that human for eternity.

15
Leaving from the village, the hero encounters a person they didn't expect to see.

- A charcoal burner (known generally as a collier in English) is someone whose occupation it was to create charcoal from felled trees. This was usually done by making a conical pile of material which was covered by turf with openings at the bottom to admit air and with a flue in the centre. The pile would then be lit and the process of combustion under those conditions produced charcoal. In medieval Europe as demand outstripped supply vast areas were deforested and fossil fuels were increasingly adopted as alternatives.

17
Crossing the Spider Fens is a three day hike and the hero does not like being in such exposed surroundings.

- In reality, the Well of Souls is a natural cave located under the foundation stone of the Dome of the Rock, located on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.
- The closest thing to a scarlet pagoda in Japan is the Senso-ji (金龍山浅草寺) Buddhist temple found in Asakusa, Tokyo (supposedly founded in 628AD). Within the grounds of the temple is a five story pagoda of a scarlet exterior colour (see above).

22
The hero calls upon Eleanor to do battle with the Gargantus in the Tourney of the Planes.

- Eleanor fittingly has a name which means 'bright one'.

- The *tetsubo* or *kanabo* (金棒) is a warhammer covered with metal studs or spikes (see opposite page). It has been traditionally associated with oni.
- The Ki-rin or *kirin* (麒麟) is a Chinese mythical hoofed creature like a chimera that was imported into Japanese culture. It is depicted as being closer to Deer in Japanese art than in Chinese, where it more closely resembles an ox. It is interesting to note that the Gargantus in the illustration is also presented as a hoofed creature.

24
Exiting the village, the hero continues to travel and soon spots a castle on the horizon.

- *daimyo* (大名), literally 'big private land', is a term used to refer to a powerful territorial lord. These were the local rulers during the feudal history of Japan and were finally stripped of their powers and control with the Meiji Restoration. During the (江戸時代) Edo period (1603~1868) they were organised and ranked based on the ability of their lands to produce rice.

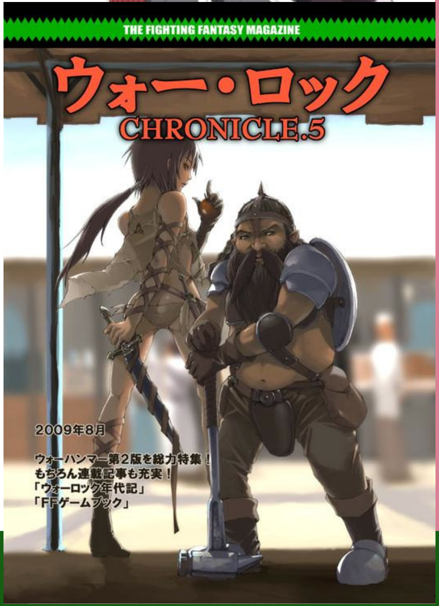
28
Plucked from the hay, the hero is taken prisoner and hauled away to a dungeon cell.

- *kimono* (着物) were a borrowing from China, based on the clothing developed there during the Han Dynasty (206BC~220AD). However it wasn't until the 8th Century that the style became popular in Japan and over the subsequent centuries it was refined and became more stylized. During the Meiji Restoration the transition towards western style clothing began and now formal kimonos are worn rarely.

GAMEBOOK20
アドベンチャーゲームブック
サムライの剣
S.ジャクソン
I.リビングストン 監修
J.トムスン
M.スミス 著
松坂　健 訳
悪
死

ウォーロック
ウォーロック

SWORD OF THE SAMURAI
Steve Jackson
and
Ian Livingstone
サムライの剣
悪
死
FIGHTING FANTASY



FIGHTING FANTASY IN 日本

Japan, during the Puffin Books publication of the range, was considered as one of the "big three" markets for the gamebooks outside of the UK and the Commonwealth (the other two were the US and France). While not quite scaling the heights of the French editions in terms of books published, the Japanese series did overtake the US series for titles. The first thirty-three books in the main series, along with *Sorcery!*, *Fighting Fantasy – The Roleplaying Game Book*, *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*, *Out of the Pit*, *The Tasks of Tantalon*, and *Casket of Souls*, were published between 1984 and 1991.

In addition to this, the Japanese version of *Warlock* magazine (ウォーロック) outlasted it's English cousin, managing sixty-three issues between 1986 and when it finally folded in 1992.

Since Wizard Books took over the licence for the series in 2002, Japan has seen a resurgence of interest in the range. The Myriador d20 conversions have been published by one company (from 2004 to 2006), the four *Sorcery!* titles republished by a second (from 2003 to 2005) and *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* and *the Citadel of Chaos* (in 2005). In addition to this, a selection of books were adapted as games for mobile phones across 2003~2004. More recently, three further titles have been published (2008~2009): *House of Hell*, *Deathtrap Dungeon*, and *Sword of the Samurai*. These three later editions feature a departure for the series in that they opt for *manga* (漫画) or 'comic'-style covers instead of the regular fantasy art of previous editions.

The reprints of the books have also seen a revival of fan interest in the series, leading to the publication of five issues of a fan magazine (ウォー・ロック　クロニクル) *Warlock Chronicle* since 2003.

29
Following the road, the hero moves along the valley of the Hang-Yo River.

- The Hang-yo River is another tricky name to place, but both translations agree of the definition of 'river of positive and negative principles' (陰陽川 and 陰陽河 respectively).
- The Road of the East Wind is perhaps based on the references from the King James version of *The Bible* (1611) in which the East Wind refers to destructive events, a concept later repeated in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (1954~55).

36
The hero is witness to the burning and rebirth of a phoenix before returning to the Hub.

- The Phoenix is a mythical bird of ancient mythology (including the Greeks, Persians, Egyptians, and Chinese). If it famous for the believed ability to recreate itself every 500~1000 years. It builds itself a nest which catches alight and burns the bird and the nest to ashes, before the reborn creature emerges from the ashes. Well known fictional appearances by a Phoenix include the Phoenix of Edith Nesbit's *The Phœnix and the Carpet* (1904) and Fawkes of J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series (1997~2007).

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39
It is a grisly end as the trident of the kappa deals the hero a swift death.

- A trident is a three-pronged implement traditionally used for spear fishing. In ancient Rome the trident became associated with a type of gladiator known as a *retiarius* ('net fighter') who would subdue his opponent with a net before finishing them with a trident. It is usually associated with the Greek god Poseidon who is often depicted as wielding one.

48
The hero has the choice of three different items to choose from in order to offer a strange woman aid.

- The "waters of knowledge" is most likely a reference to the Perian Spring of Greek mythology, which drinking from was believed to bring knowledge and inspiration. It was later made famous by Alexander Pope (1688~1744) in his poem *An Essay on Criticism* (1711) in which he writes:

> *A little learning is a dang'rous thing;*
> *Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:*

A phrase that has, since its publication, often been misquoted through using only the first of the two above lines and thus misunderstood by many as an attack on learning!

52
The Tatsu is frustrated and annoyed by the abilities of the hero and gives some cryptic help.

- *jizo* (地蔵) is the Japanese for the enlightened being of Buddhism, Ksitigarbha, who is usually depicted as a Buddhist monk. As in the illustration that later accompanies his appearance (220), he is usually depicted with a staff which can force open the gates of hell.

56
The hero is attacked by a samurai who is loyal to Lord Tsietsin and recognises them for who they are.

- *~sama* (様) is a Japanese honorific used as a suffix to someone's name when referring to them (*Tsietsin-sama*). It is usually used to refer to people of a higher rank than the speaker, customers, or someone the speaker greatly respects. It is a far more respectful term than the standard use of *san* (さん), the equivalent of Mr/Mrs/etc., or the more diminutive terms *chan* (ちゃん) and *kun* (くん) often used when talking to children.

65
Still stuck in the trap, the hero notices that the forest has gone silent as something approaches.

- *shako-gurubi* appears to have constructed as *shako* (遮光), to 'shade' or 'darken' and *gurubi* possibly means a wild cat of some kind, but the translation escapes this writer! However, this matters not, as the term is rendered as *mori no hyou* (森の豹) in the Japanese translations, which roughly means 'forest leopard' and ignores any *gurubi* loss for words.

68
Stepping out onto the Elder Plain, the hero is watched by a massive Sabre-toothed Tiger.

- The term "sabre-tooth tiger" is often used to describe several members of the extended sabre-tooth cat family found worldwide between the Eocene and Pleistocene epochs (42 million years ago to 11,000 years ago). Despite being presented in various media as quite large, the majority of these "big cats" were either no bigger or smaller than modern big cats. The most recognisable of these ancient creatures is probably the Smilodon (existing from 1.8 million years ago to 10,000 years ago), which was smaller than an African Lion and most likely not a fast runner.

75
The magician causes the statue of Hammurabi to come to life and the air is filled with insects.

- Hammurabi (died c.1750BC) was in reality the sixth king of Babylon from 1792BC until his death. He extended Babylon's control over Mesopotamia through a series of wars with neighbouring states and is probably most famous for his code of laws. This code, rediscovered in 1901, featured 282 laws and their punishments for breaking them (most of which were along the lines of the traditional "an eye for an eye" pattern or the death penalty).
- The term "lord of the flies" borrows from the famous 1954 novel *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding (1911~1993), in which a group of British schoolboys find themselves stranded on a deserted island . They attempt to govern themselves, in the face of no adult supervision, with disastrous results.

76
The hero finds themselves in the presence of Onikaru in the Pit of Demons.

- Gargoyles, as decorative features of building gutters and spouting, have an extended history, appearing on ancient Egyptian structures as well as Greek buildings such as the Temple of Zeus. They, along with the Etruscans and Romans, generally used animal heads as the spouts and throughout the medieval European period people as well as animals were used. The purpose was to divert water away from the building where it might cause erosion of the mortar and blocks holding the structure up. By the Eighteenth century the use of downpipes was supplanting gargoyles and in 1724 in England the government made the use of downpipes compulsory. What most people think of as gargoyles on older buildings are in fact called *grotesques* and are purely decorative, not featuring as part of a water spout. This modern 'understanding' of the word gargoyle is what generally appears in the world of *Fighting Fantasy*. These type of Gargoyles are featured in *The Citadel of Chaos* (Steve Jackson, 1983), *Midnight Rogue* (Graeme Davis, 1987), *Daggers of Darkness* (Luke Sharp, 1988), and *Knights of Doom* (Jonathan Green, 1994) amongst many others.

82

At the Hagakure Bridge the hero crosses and encounters an undead Samurai blocking the way.

- Hiang-Kiang River, like Tsietsin before it (see 10), is clearly not of Japanese origin given the construction of the words. Because of this, one version of the Japanese edition that didn't use katakana simply calls it the Hangyo River again (see 29), which presumably causes some geographical confusion for Japanese fans when playing the gamebook! The other non-katakana translation opts to render it as *heiwakawa* (平安川), which can be rendered as 'peace river'. It has been suggested by some fans that the name instead refers to the island of Hong Kong, with a translation from Chinese giving the meaning of 'sweet waters', suggesting that the first translator (opting for heiwakawa) was thinking along similar lines.
- The appearance of the kanji on the battle standard of the undead samurai is repeated here (see Cover), seemingly suggesting that Japanese (or at least the ideograms borrowed from the Chinese language) is a language used in Titan.

91

Inside the cave the hero is tempted by a beautiful woman to feast of the heart of a human baby.

- The *nushi*, despite a Japanese-sounding name, appears to have no direct link to a Japanese legend and one of the translations simply calls her a *yamauba* (山姥) or 'mountain witch'. The other defines her as *zyushi* (濡師) or 'damp master'! People preying on babies as food is a long-standing feature of mythology and blame shifting, from the Roman god Saturn eating his children, to prevent them being more powerful than himself, to the baby eating witches of Baba Yaga and the tale *Hansel and Gretel*, to Jews being accused of the same thing as part of their traditional Passover meal. Writer Jonathan Swift (1667~1745) famously wrote a satirical essay, *A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People in Ireland from Being a Burden to Their Parents or Country, and for Making Them Beneficial to the Public* (1729), in which he argued that the Irish could improve their lot by selling their children as food for the rich.

99

Having reached a point in their life where they are completely with honour, the hero dies by seppuku.

- *seppuku* (切腹) is the custom of ritual suicide by disembowelment and was an action reserved only for samurai (see "Background"). Generally it was meant to allow samurai an 'honourable' escape from capture by enemies or as a capital punishment for crimes committed. It was also performed in cases where a samurai had through action or inaction brought great shame and dishonour upon themselves. As the act became less utilised on the battlefield and more for dealing with criminal or political issues the whole process became more ritualised, evolving to include a white kimono, writing a poem about death and the favourite meal of the person about to die. In practise the person involved would make a left-to-right cut in their stomach using a knife or short sword and would then be decapitated by their second (a person attending the seppuku). A variation on this was for those samurai without a second attending them and known as *jumonji giri* (十文字切り). This had an added vertical cut after the left-to-right to bring a quicker end than the single horizontal cut might have done.

106

Leaving the valley, the hero and their follower find themselves facing the Forest of Shadows.

- Another Japanese name, *Yomitsume Moichi*, and a pick of possible translations. Ignoring the third translation again, the first translation opts for (弓常茂市) which can mean 'bow normal rank city', while the second picks (黄泉爪茂市) or 'yellow spring nail rank city'.

113

Leaping across the columns of stone, the hero is soon out of sight of the dyke.

- Basalt is a common volcanic rock usually of a grey-to-black colour and the columns of stone referred to here are an example of what happens when a thick lava flow cools quickly. The rapid cooling of the basalt results in cracks forming during the horizontal shrinking, as this direction of shrinking can not be easily accommodated, and the cracks take on a network of columns (see left).

119

The hero makes a bold attempt to escape an encounter with a possibly fearsome creature.

- A tourniquet is a device used to constrict the flow of blood and appears to have been initially developed by the Romans as a means of controlling bleeding during amputations. Today they are generally used to either keep a surgical area clear of blood during an operation or as a means of preventing blood loss during an emergency when surgical help is not immediately to hand.

132

The escaping hero runs into a guard and has to engage them in battle.

- *hida* is a family surname and the Japanese translations of the books given two possible options. With the first (飛騨) it has the meaning of 'flying dappled grey horse' and with the second (肥田) it is 'fertiliser for rice field'. Despite sounding like a generic Japanese surname for a never-seen-again guard, Hida doesn't even make it into the top 50 list of common Japanese surnames based on research done in 2006.

134

Using the bow and arrow, the hero moves to attack. But is it an ordinary or special arrow?

- Like Hida (see 132), *tsunewara* is a family surname. The two kanji-inclined translations of the gamebook give the options of either (常原), which reads as 'normal field', and (常藁) which is rendered as 'normal straw'. Neither meaning has any relation to the occupation of the named individual who is the maker of arrows.

138

Stepping through the door marked 'The Place of Battle', the hero believes they are ready to face the Dai-Oni.

- The Praying Mantis (*Mantis religiosa*) is only one of the many species of Mantis and usually only grow to between 5~7.5cm in length, although other species of Mantis can reach up to 10cm in size. A Giant Mantis also appears in

Basalt Photo: © Matthew Mayer, 2010 Used under Public Domain rights

Bloodbones (Green, 2006).

149

The monotony is broken by a strange web stretched between two trees.

- *totate kumo* (戸閉蜘蛛) in this case is simply the Japanese for Trapdoor Spider, literally reading as 'door shut spider'. Giant Spiders are a regular feature of *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks (see "The Fact of Fiction" in issue #2), while the Trapdoor variety specifically appear again in *Howl of the Werewolf* (Green, 2007).

176

The hero has freed a village and the villagers expresses their thanks at the change in situation.

- Another Japanese name with *ninji* and one for which both translations opt for the same reading (忍次). This can be translated as 'patience next'.
- *shinmen* is another name, the Japanese editions going with either (新免), translated as 'new exemption', or (新面) which would be 'new aspect'. The description of Shimen suggests that this is another reference to Miyamoto Musashi (see Special Rules) who was also known by the name Shinmen Tazeko.

179

With an old man as a guide, the hero heads towards the Vale of Tinshu.

- *kanshuro*, the name for the dales travelled across, is rendered as (観水楼) or 'view of water tower' in the first translation as (冠州楼) 'crown state tower' in the second. The "tower" part of the translated names in no doubt in reference to the limestone cliffs mentioned in the paragraph.
- *tinshu* here as the name of the vale is given either (鎮水), which means 'tranquillize water', or (枕愁) which is resolved as 'pillow distress'. Of the two the second better fits the sinister nature of the village that the hero enters, one which is infested with nukekubi (see 9).

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182

The hero has discovered an iron war-fan with some strange markings upon it.

- That this is an *iron* war-fan suggests that it is an example of the third type of Japanese war-fan known as *gunpai* (軍配), which were large solid open fans (see above). This type of fan was usually carried by people of higher rank in feudal Japan in order to fend off arrows, signal orders to lower ranking individuals, or as a sunshade. The other two types were the *gunsen* (軍扇), which was simply a folding fan carried by samurai, and the *tessen* (鉄扇), which were either a folding fan made of iron plates and designed to look like the *gunsen* fans, or a club-like solid piece of iron fashioned to look like a closed fan. This second type of fan could then by taken into areas where other overt weaponry (such as swords) were forbidden.

195

Finding a goatherd's hut, the hero investigates to see if it can offer shelter for the night.

- Once more we have a Japanese name, this time *Ginsei Yoro*. What is interesting about how the character is treated in the Japanese non-katakana translations is that one of them recasts the character (despite the accompanying picture) as a female! The first version, as a male, is (銀斎余呂) Ginsei *Yoro* or 'silver purification with too much spine', while the second is (銀星鎧) Ginsei *Yoroi*, which is female and means 'silver star puts on armour'.
- With *toda* (戸田), another Japanese name, both the non-katakana translations of the gamebook opt for the same kanji. These translate simply as 'door to rice field'.

197

With impressive skill, the hero bounds free of the clutches of the Groundhog.

- Interestingly, the creature referred to here, the Groundhog, *isn't* a borrowing from Japan or wider Asia. The Groundhog can be solely found in the United States, their habitat spreading from Alaska in the north to Alabama in the south-east. They have their own day of celebration in American, February 2nd, and subsequently a comedy film based on that day, *Groundhog Day* (1993). Groundhogs however are of the *Marmota* genus and examples of that genus do exist in Asia, such as the Long-tailed Marmot.

275

The hero is quickly engaged in a battle to the death with the ronin Ginsei.

- A *ronin* (浪人) is a samurai (see "Background") with no lord or master to serve. This was a term of shame in feudal Japan as, especially during the Edo period, a samurai was expected to commit seppuku (see 99) upon their master's death and failing to go through with that act was considered dishonourable.

329

Entering a small cave to escape a possible earthquake, the hero finds a suit of armour.

- Chalcedony is a type of decorative stone of which Onyx and Agate are two well known expressions. It is a form of silica and while it can be found in many colours, the pink variety seen here is not a common colour.
- The seventh seal is most likely a reference to the seventh seal as featured in *Revelation* 8 in *The Bible*. The opening of each seal is followed by a major event (war and famine are two examples) and the seventh seal is marked by seven other events, each heralded by an angel sounding a trumpet before leading into the final judgement.

366

With Tsietsin defeated, the hero takes a moment to investigate the spoils of war.

- Stygian is the adjectival form of the River Styx of Greek mythology, where *styx* means 'hate' or 'detestation'. In many cases, as here, it has come to mean the blackest of blacks or hellish.

391

With a deft strike the Black Elf falls dead and the hero can claim their prize.

- Elk are endemic to parts of North America and Asia (although not Japan where Sika Deer are the dominant species). The suggestion of a Black Elk here is at odds with their uniform red hair colouring, although one prominent medicine man of the Sioux was named Heȟáka Sápa (c.1863~1950), which translates as 'Black Elk'. Given that Hachiman and the Isles of the Dawn are opposites of their inspiring Earth countries (see Background), perhaps this applies to the flora and fauna as well as the cultures. Would that mean that Sika Deer can be found on the Isles of the Dawn?

397

Moving through the last territory securely held by the Shogun, the hero encounters a Black Elk.

- A 'march' is a border region, marking as it does here the furthest extend of the Shogun's territory. Probably the best known marches in existence today would be the Welsh Marches, which although having no modern legal definition, are still used as a common description of the English counties that border Wales.

THE ADVENTURE GAME

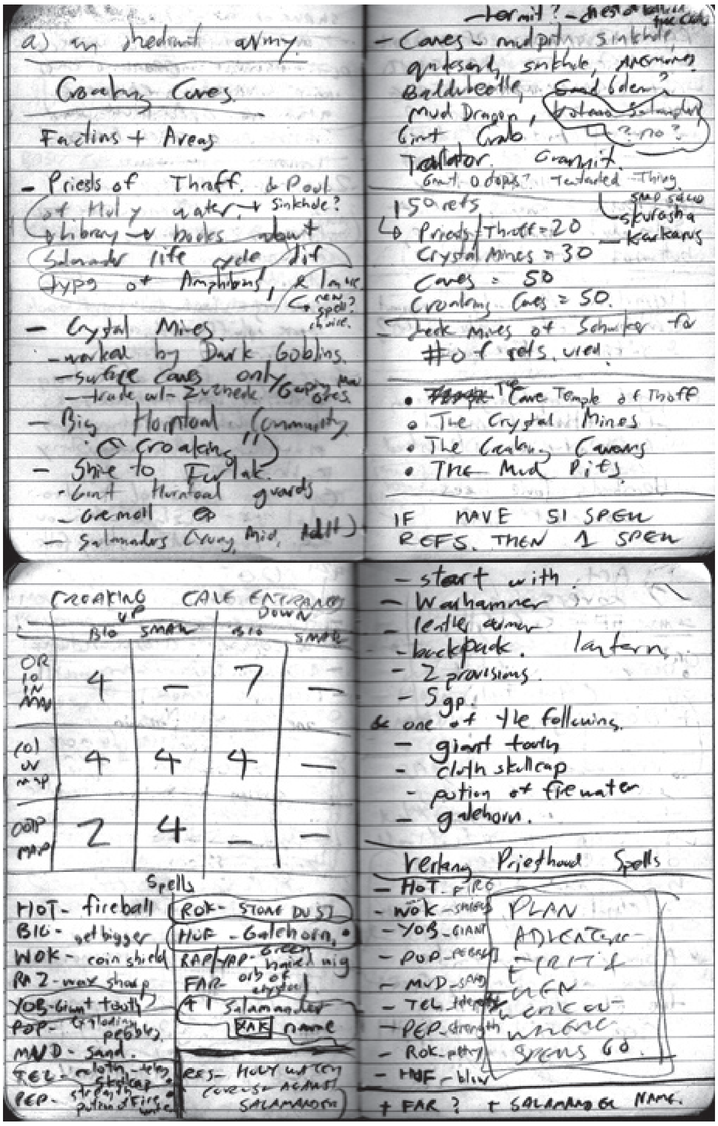
How to Write Your Own *Fighting Fantasy* Gamebook

In the first part of a new series of articles, **Andrew Wright** explains going about finding that spark of inspiration for your gamebook adventure and points to consider as you begin planning...

Way back in the dawn of time (or at least the mid-Eighties), after I'd started collecting *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks, it did cross my mind that perhaps I should try and write my own. The one thing that conspired against this however, was an utter lack of an audience. *Warlock* magazine was dead and buried, there were no other journals or periodicals to submit interactive stories to, and all my gaming friends were more enthusiastic about tabletop RPG's and computer games. And so I filed that idea away in a dusty corner of my brain, and pretty much forgot all about it for the next ten years.

Fast forward to 1998. I'm sharing a flat (and a computer with an internet connection) in Bangkok with my girlfriend, plus assorted other reprobates, and I discover the nascent *Fighting Fantasy* fan community on the web. The books may have stopped being published, but there were new fan-written adventures available, and advice on how to write your own. I was instantly hooked! In between teaching English, coaching football and playing bass in a few bands, I could suddenly be found sketching out elaborate flowcharts, writing down long lists of numbers, and scrawling ideas for encounters and adventures, all on any scrap of paper that came to hand. I had started writing amateur *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks...

Amazingly, over a decade later, I'm still writing them! What follows is my take on the process I go through to get them into a relatively coherent state before uploading them to the web for all to enjoy (or not!). I've split it into six rough stages, each accompanied by actual examples from my various adventures, so you can get an idea of the work I put in to get my stories into a playable state. This is followed by an appendix with links to other gamebook-writing theories, of which Steven "Ishtra" Taylor's is probably the method that most inspired mine. I haven't heard from Steven for a long, long time, but his early fan writings, like *Rebels of the Dark Chasms* and *Da Ferst Novul*, certainly motivated me to wander down



a) an [illegible] army

Croaking Caves

Factions + Areas

- Priests of Thaff. & Pool of Holy water → Sinkhole?
→ Library → books about Salamander life cycle diff types of Amphibians, & lore → new spell? choice.
- Crystal Mines
- worked by Dark Goblins.
- surface caves only/[illegible]
- trade w/ [illegible] ores
- Big Hornhead (community "@ Croaking")
- Shrine to Furlak.
- Giant Hornhead guards
- Gremoll @
- Salamanders (Young, Mid, Adult)

- hermit? - [illegible]
- Caves - mudpit, sinkhole, quicksand, sinkhole, Anemones, Baldybeetle, Sand [illegible]? Mud Dragon, ~~Volcano Salamander~~ ?no? Giant Crab, Tarantula, Crampit. Giant 0 dops? Tentacled Thing [illegible] Skurasha - Karkaris

150 refs
→ Priests/Thaff = 20
Crystal Mines = 30
Caves = 50
Croaking Caves = 50.
- Look maps of [illegible] for # of refs. used

- ~~[illegible]~~ The Cave Temple of Thaff
- The Crystal Mines
- The Croaking Caverns
- The Mud Pits

IF HAVE 51 SPELL REFS. THEN 1 SPELL

CROAKING CAVE ENTRANCES	UP BIG	UP SMALL	DOWN BIG	DOWN SMALL
OR 10 IN MAP	4	–	7	–
[illegible] ON MAP	4	4	4	–
OOP MAP	2	4	–	–

Spells
HOT - fireball
BIG - get bigger
WOK - coin shield
RAZ - wax shoes
YOB - Giant tooth
POP - exploding pebbles
MUD - sand
TEL - cloth skullcap
PEP - strength potion of Fire water
ROK - STONE DUST
HUF - Galehorn
RAP/YAP - green haired wig
FAR - orb of crystal
4 I Salamander FAR name
EES - HOLY WATER CURSE AGAINST SALAMANDER

- start with
- Warhammer
- leather armour
- backpack. lantern
- 2 provisions
- 5 gp.
& one of the following
- giant tooth
- cloth skullcap
- potion of firewater
- galehorn.

[illegible] Priesthood Spells
- HOT - FIRE
- WOK - shield
- YOB - GIANT
- POP - pebbles
- MUD - sand
- TEL - telepathy
- PEP - strength
- ROK - petrify
- HUF - blow

PLAN ADVENTURE FIRST THEN WORK OUT WHERE SPELLS GO.

+ FAR ? + SALAMANDER NAME.

Figure 1: **Four pages from my notebook showing ideas for *Shrine of the Salamander*. Here we can see ideas for "Factions and Areas", a section breakdown by area, a list of potential spells and starting equipment, and a quick survey of the number Croaking Cave entrances based on maps of Kakhabad.**

Scans: © Andrew Wright, 2010

this weird and lonely, if occasionally extremely rewarding, road. Hopefully this article will likewise inspire you to start writing your own *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks!

Stage One: The Idea

You need to start with a basic idea. I used to find this part extremely difficult. 'What could I possibly write about?' I'd think. Now, I have more ideas in a day than I could detail in a year. There are three tricks I use to achieve this:

Context. Look at things through that very special interactive lens of multiple numbered choices. This could be something directly related to *Fighting Fantasy*, such as a character or location you like from Titan, or something as mundane as a visit to the park (for example, what would it be like to be a gardener in Lord Azzur's Gardens of Port Blacksand? What equipment would you need as a starting character?).

Think: 'What would happen if I did this? What would happen next? What would happen after that? How far can I possibly take this?' Use your imagination to think up new or spectacular outcomes to situations. Make sure it's something you like, or are interested in, as it will make the motivating part of Stage Five below all the easier.

Example: After discovering *Fighting Fantasy* on the web, I wanted to write a small adventure, just to see if I could actually do it. I figured "Small adventure, small subject" and struck upon the idea of using a Troglodyte – those Goblin-like runts of the Titan dungeon mini-fauna – for the main character. What would an adventure be like if you had to be a Troglodyte for the whole time? The rest of the adventure flowed from there.

Other examples of context could include:

- What would it be like for an adventurer to visit the Pit where all of Titan's demons come from?
- What would it be like to be a Caarth warrior? Or a Lizard Man legionary?
- Could you convert *The Tasks of Tantalon* puzzle book into a *Fighting Fantasy* adventure?
- Could you write an adventure set in Amarillia that doesn't reference either the Bone Demon or Zagor?

By taking an under-used aspect of Titan or the real world, or another world entirely, and rotating it through various contexts, you can come up with a whole heap of ideas that could make for intriguing *Fighting Fantasy* adventures.

Variety. This is a recent trick I now use after reading about the creative process at Pixar, a company I greatly admire (mainly as their films keep my daughter and I endlessly entertained!). Instead of thinking of one good idea, think up three good ideas. Chances are, you'll probably still go with your original idea, but the other two will provide different perspectives, allowing your brain to consider different strategies and thus engage in a fair bit of lateral thinking. You'll find it easier to see potential flaws in your ideas, and find ways to strengthen them and make them better. You may also use or cannibalize the other ideas eventually for other adventures – however, the main point is to evaluate your three choices, and see which one works best and whether you'll like working on it.

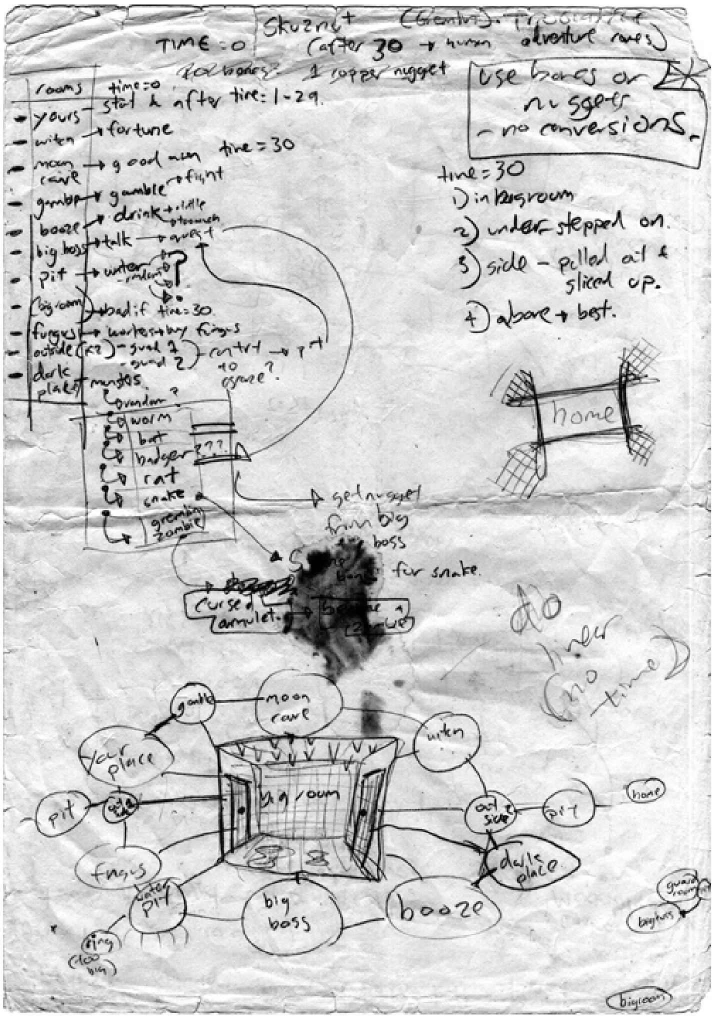

TIME:0
Skuznut (Gremlin). Troglodyte
(after 30 → human adventure rules)
1 copper nugget
use bones or nuggets – no conversions.
rooms
time=0 start & after time: 1-29.
yours
witch → fortune
moon cave → good man time=30
gamble → gamble → fight
booze → drink → little stomach
big boss → talk → quest
pit → water
big room → bad if time=30.
fungus
outside → guard 1 – guard 2
control → pit
escape?
dark place → monsters
random?
worm
bat
badger???
rat
snake
gremlin zombie
get nugget from big boss
for snake.
cursed amulet.
time=30
1) in big room
2) under stepped on.
3) side – pulled out & sliced up.
4) above → best.
home
do liner (no time)
moon cave
witch
your place
gamble
big room
pit
outside
home
fungus
water pit
big boss
booze
dark place
big room

Figure 2: **This shows the original sheet of ideas that would form my first finished *Fighting Fantasy* adventure – *Lair of the Troglodytes*. We can see a stack of ideas for rooms and occupants, as well as a map schematic (that would change), and a few ideas that got ditched along the way, including a time limit, and that the hero Skuznut was originally a Gremlin.**

After all, you really don't want to be in the position of Yann Martel, author of *Life of Pi*, where:

> *...it all adds up to nothing. In spite of the obvious, shining promise of it, there comes a moment when you realize that the whisper that has been pestering you all along from the back of your mind is speaking the flat, awful truth: it won't work... Your story is emotionally dead, that's the crux of it. The discovery is something soul-destroying, I tell you. It leaves you with an aching hunger.*

Example: I want to write a short mini-adventure with 25 to 50 sections, set the lands of Kakhabad. I come up with three ideas to explore:

- A prequel to *Shrine of the Salamander* (see *Fighting Fantazine* issue 2), where you play a Horntoad champion who is about to steal the idol of Verlang from the priests of the Copperstone Caves.
- A tavern brawl/market mayhem combination where you play a visitor to the Bakland town of Zuzbeck, staring down Orcs, Svinns, Black Elves and worse.
- An adventure set in the Forest of the Snatta, where you play a monster hunter tracking down Firefoxes, Snatta-

cats, and so forth, for potion and spell ingredients.

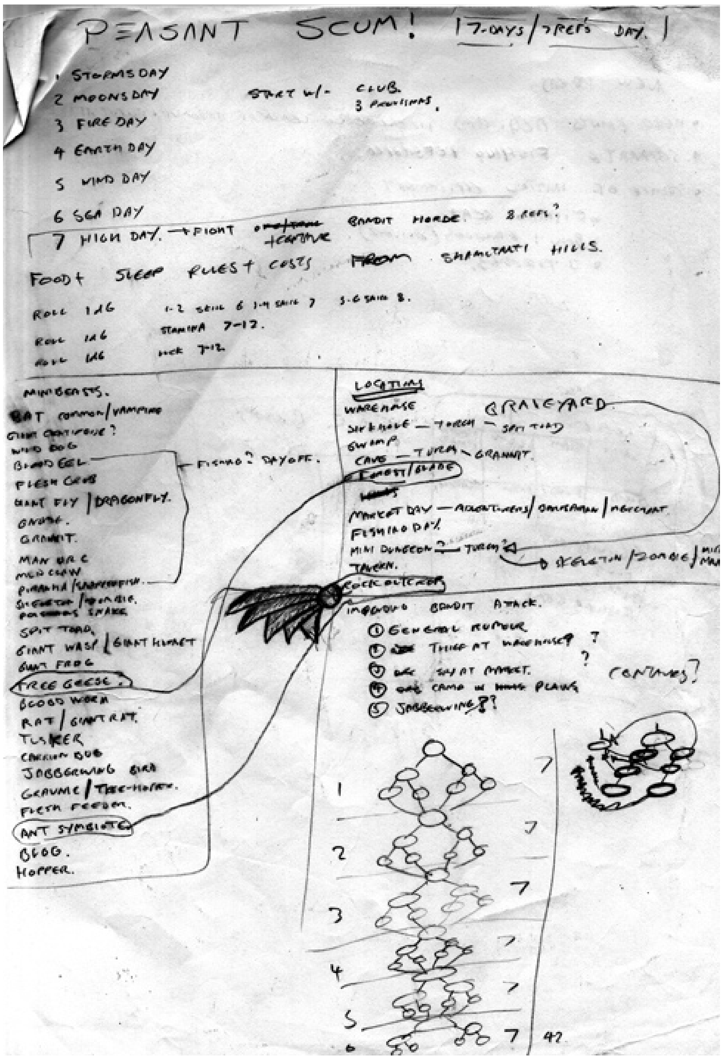
In the end the Horntoad prequel is the most appealing to me. I like the idea of trying to write from the perspective of a fat warty giant toad-like creature. Different strokes, and all that...

To practice this, take one of the ideas given in the "Context" section above, and try and create three alternatives for it. Which one do you like most? Which one would you feel most comfortable writing? Why?

Notebook. In an increasingly digital age, I find it quite therapeutic to carry around a small book and pencil with which to scrawl down ideas and sketches whenever the mood takes me. No loading time, no time wasted opening apps, no file-saving, no book-keeping. Just pencil and paper. The pencil versus pen argument is an eternal one – pens leak, get blocked, or run out; pencils break and need erasers and sharpeners – I carry a 2B pencil and try not to break it. For paper, I use a Moleskine soft cover notebook (9x14cm, 192 lined pages) for preference, but anything that can fit in your back pocket should be fine. I carry it everywhere, and stick it on the bedside at night. That way, whenever you get hit by a bolt of inspiration from the wide blue yonder – be it a weird dream, a bank queue, or waiting for your better half by the supermarket checkout – you can write it down and commit it to paper. See *Figure 1* for an example.

So, you write your chosen idea down in your notebook, and start brainstorming incessantly. Part of this will be revisiting the "Context" trick above, where you note down situations that will happen in your adventure. Add a whole bunch of other stuff, like:

- Places. Where is the adventure set? Somewhere familiar like Port Blacksand, or somewhere new, like the bone-adorned catacombs beneath the City of Mazes. Perhaps the adventure is an epic one, and spans a series of terrains and locations. This is possibly one of the most important parts of your adventure, as deciding on a place will dictate what could reasonably be expected to occur or dwell there, like...
- Monsters. Crucial to any *Fighting Fantasy* adventure! Are there favourites you want to include? Monsters you feel are under-used and deserve representation? New monsters you'd like to inflict on the next generation of nameless adventurers?
- Foes and Enemies. What bad guys do you want? Old familiar enemies or entirely new ones? Evil sorcerers, chaos warlords or demon-worshipping priests? Perhaps your adventure is more modern in tone, and has no one main foe. Perhaps there's a whole gallery of them, or perhaps



PEASANT SCUM! 17-DAYS/7RETS DAY.

1 STORMSDAY
2 MOONSDAY
3 FIREDAY
4 EARTH DAY
5 WIND DAY
6 SEA DAY
7 HIGH DAY. → FIGHT ~~[illegible]~~ +CAPTIVE BANDIT HORDE 8 REFS?

START w/- CLUB. 3 PROVISIONS.

FOOD + SLEEP RULES + COSTS ~~FROM~~ SHAMUTANTI HILLS.

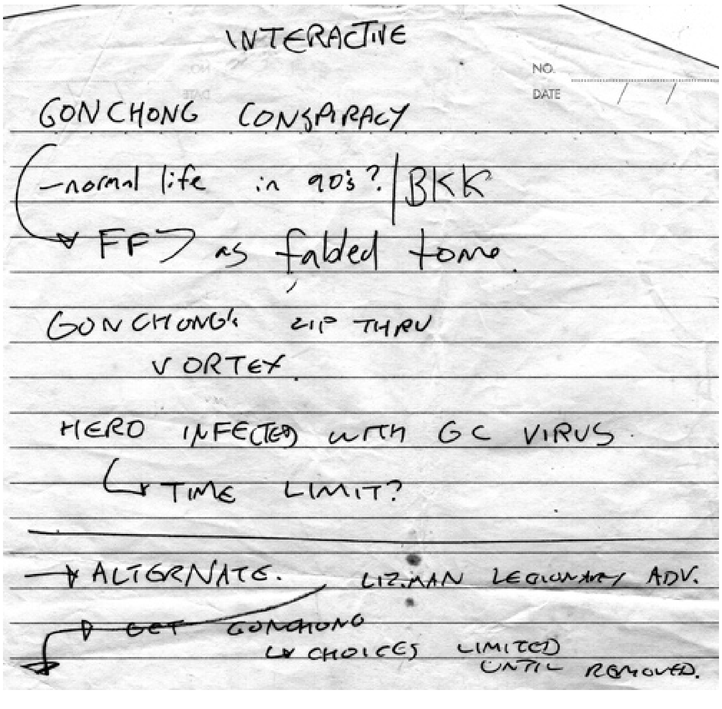
ROLL 1D6 1-2 SKILL 6 3-4 SKILL 7 5-6 SKILL 8.
ROLL 1D6 STAMINA 7-12.
ROLL 1D6 LUCK 7-12

MINIBEASTS.
BAT common/VAMPIRE
GIANT CENTIPEDE?
WILD DOG
BLOOD EEL
FLESH GRUB
GIANT FLY | DRAGONFLY.
GNOME.
GRANNIT.
MAN ORC
MED CLAW
PIRANHA/[illegible]
SKELETON/ZOMBIE.
POISONOUS SNAKE
SPIT TOAD,
GIANT WASP | GIANT HORNET
GIANT FROG
FREE GEESE.
BLOOD WORM
RAT | GIANT RAT.
TUSKER
CARRION BUG
JABBERWING BIRD
GRAVMIE | TREE-HOPPER.
FLESH FEEDER.
ANT SYMBIOTE
BLOG.
HOPPER.

← FISHING? DAYOFF.

LOCATIONS
WAREHOUSE
GRAVEYARD
SEWAGE — TORCH — SPIT TOAD
SWAMP
CAVE — TORCH — GRANNIT
FOREST/GLADE
MARKET DAY — ADVENTURERS/BARBARIAN/MERCHANT
FISHING DAY
MINI DUNGEON ? — TORCH?
→ SKELETON/ZOMBIE/MINI MAN
TAVERN.
ROCK OUTCROP
IMPENDING BANDIT ATTACK.
① GENERAL RUMOUR
② ~~[illegible]~~ THIEF AT WAREHOUSE? ?
③ ~~[illegible]~~ SPY AT MARKET. ?
④ ~~[illegible]~~ CAMP IN [illegible] PLAINS
⑤ JABBERWING? ?
CONTAINS?

Figure 3 **(top): Here's the idea sheet for my adventure** ***Impudent Peasant!*** **which was originally entitled** ***Peasant Scum!*** **This one's much more organized – we have notes on the days of the week; rules for food, sleep and starting ability scores; lists of "Minibeasts" and locations; news of an "Impending Bandit Attack"; and even a rough flowchart.**



INTERACTIVE
GONCHONG CONSPIRACY
—normal life in 90's? | BKK
→ FF7 as fabled tome.
GONCHONG's ZIP THRU
VORTEX
HERO INFECTED WITH GC VIRUS.
↳ TIME LIMIT?

→ ALTERNATE. LIZMAN LEGIONARY ADV.
→ ~~GET~~ GONCHONG
↳ CHOICES LIMITED UNTIL REMOVED.

Figure 4 **(left): The unused idea. Here's a scrawl I made for a "real world"** ***Fighting Fantasy*** **adventure about the dreaded Gonchong parasites invading Earth, called Gonchong Conspiracy. This is an excellent example of something scribbled down after a weird dream – in my dream you had to go to a bookshop and buy a copy of** ***Island of the Lizard King*** **in order to discover how to kill the Gonchongs that were taking over Bangkok. I never developed it any further, but it's always interesting to store these away in an ideas folder because you never know when they may prove useful.**

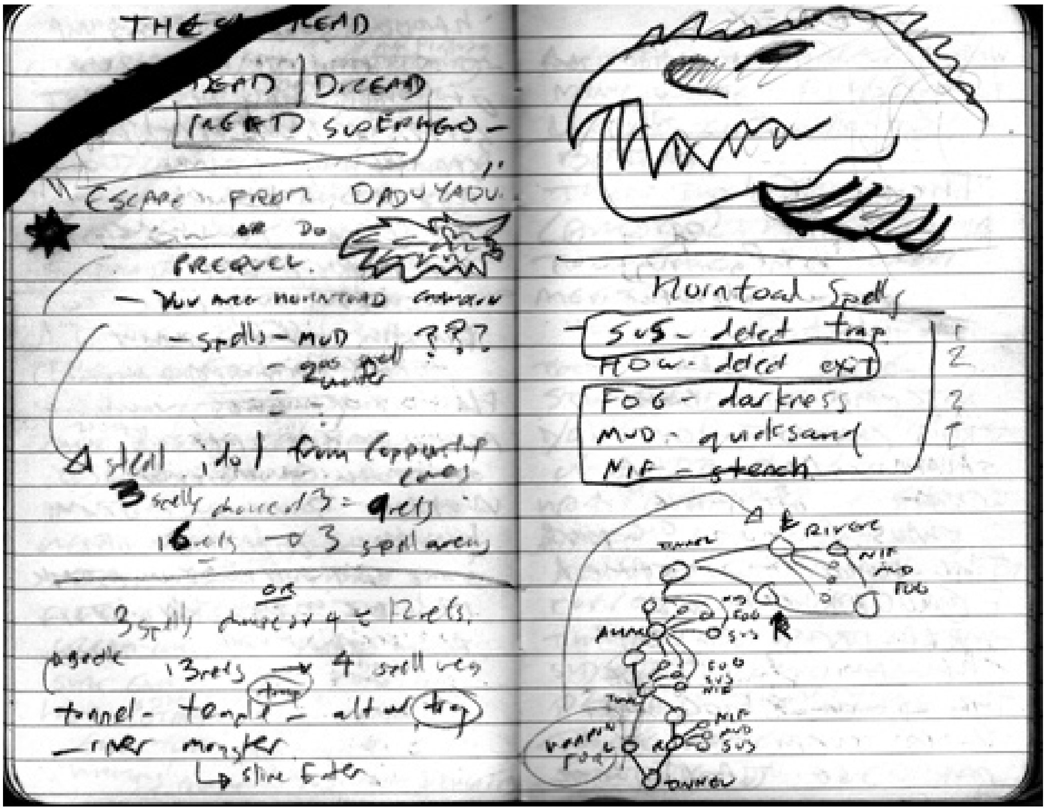


Figure 5: **This is a few ideas developing the Horntoad prequel we looked at in the Variety section above. I've noted down some potential spells – evidently our Horntoad hero is some kind of shaman – and sketched out a rough map. It's obviously a fairly small adventure, perhaps around 25 sections.**

the foe is an ex-friend or relative of the hero.

- Friends and Allies. Who's helping your hero? Anybody? Again, are they regular characters or ones you'll make up? At this point (and also when considering Foes above), it may be worth trying to deviate from standard archetypes. Perhaps your hero's mentor is not some old grey bearded wizard but an Amazon with a talking sword who's always turning up to save their worthless hide.
- Other Characters. What other people will be in the adventure? Normal fantasy tropes like innkeepers, blacksmiths, merchants, and the like. Or strange new personalities and professions, such as ostrich riders, quicksand harvesters, or people who dwell in the carcasses of dead Giant Sandworms, to name but three.
- Items. This could be simply treasure or more useful things needed to complete certain parts of the adventure. If you have treasure or gold, make sure you also include merchants and markets – people love buying stuff! Or perhaps it is related to a scoring system you plan to implement at the end of the adventure.
- Tricks and Traps. Lethal or otherwise, these are a must. All traps though should have some means of being avoided, whether it be information gleaned previously, useful items acquired, or simply testing how agile or lucky the hero is. Traps that kill without warning or reason can be fairly tedious...
- Spells and Magic. Can your hero use magic? Will they get an opportunity in the adventure to learn some spells? What system will you use – *Sorcery!*, *The Citadel of Chaos*, or perhaps one of your own devising? Will the main foe also be a spellcaster, making the final encounter a true war of the wizards? These are some of the questions you could think about if you wanted to include spells and magic in your adventure.
- Mazes, Riddles, and Mini-games. More common components of *Fighting Fantasy* adventures. Does your hero have to decipher strange languages or inscriptions, or navigate through a maze of twisty corridors all alike? Are there riddles to answer (hopefully using lore gained from within your adventure)? Or must your hero win a boat race down the Catfish River? Working out the rules to these is almost as much fun as planning the rest of the adventure!
- New or Old Rules. Are you using standard *Fighting Fantasy* rules? Perhaps you'd like to implement a skills system, or a choice of different professions. Is there a new ability score you'd like to introduce to measure your hero's intellect, sanity, or charisma? Maybe you'd like to use codewords, to "remember" things that happen within the adventure, or maybe there's a neat mechanic you'd like to borrow from a previous adventure. Bear in mind, one of the features of *Fighting Fantasy* that made it so successful was its simplistic but easily modifiable rule-set. If you make things too complicated, you may end up alienating potential readers.

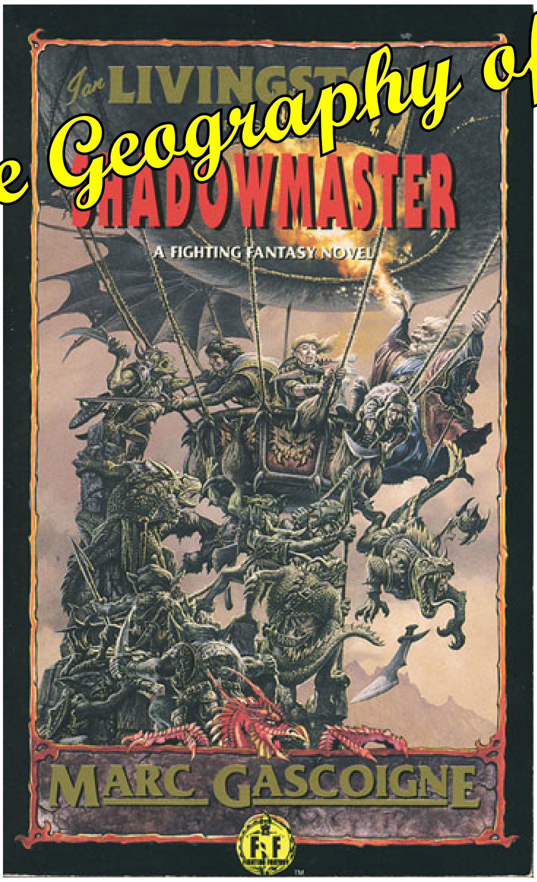
It's your adventure – write down all the things you'd want, if you were playing through the gamebook. What do you like in gamebooks? Think of other similar published adventures – what didn't work? How could they make it better? Could you add it to your adventure and improve upon it?

Scribble all these ideas down on paper. Sketch out some rough maps. Importantly, make sure your hand-writing is legible. There's no point writing down the secret to creating the best gamebook ever on a pint coaster after a night down the pub (although this allegedly led to the genesis of the *Red Dwarf* TV series), if you can't read what you wrote when you wake up the next morning. *Seinfeld* episodes have been based around less!

The example *figures* spread throughout the article are all differing examples of me scrawling down a bunch of ideas for various *Fighting Fantasy* adventures. Personally, I find it the most enjoyable stage. You're being totally creative, jotting down various brainstorms and lines of thought, without actually committing to the heavy workload of planning and writing that may or may not follow. It's fun!

I hope you've enjoyed this brief look at developing ideas to turn into potential *Fighting Fantasy* adventures. Next issue we'll look at two extremely crucial stages: Planning, and making the Flowchart. In the meantime, start brainstorming!

The Geography of



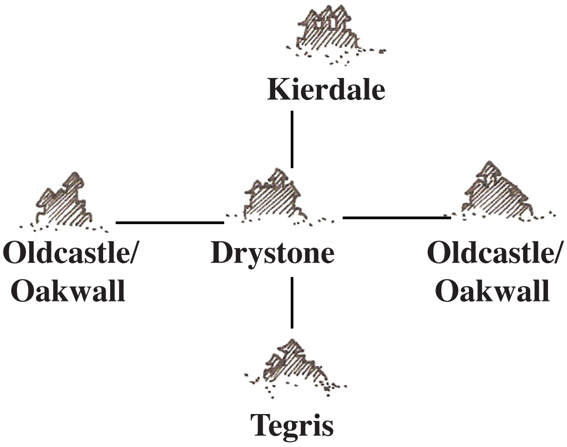
Exploring further the geographical conundrums of Titan, **Warren McGuire** investigates the mention of a number of places in the third *Fighting Fantasy* novel *Shadowmaster* and where they might be located in Allansia.

Unlike the first *Fighting Fantasy* novel, *The Trolltooth Wars*, the subsequent two novels, *Demonstealer* and *Shadowmaster*, do not include maps of the areas in which the action takes place (the last colour *Fighting Fantasy* map appears in *Tower of Destruction*, published in 1991; *Demonstealer* and *Shadowmaster* were published in 1991 and 1992 respectively). This is rather unfortunate, since the action in both of these novels largely takes place in unfamiliar locations which do not appear in previous *Fighting Fantasy* maps and, as a result, the geographical information contained within these novels, whilst of the utmost interest, is often rather difficult to interpret.

The purpose of this article is to clarify the geography of *Shadowmaster*, in particular the geography of the lands between Darkwood Forest and the Moonstone Hills, where a substantial part of the plot unfolds. Although interpretation of the geographical information in *Shadowmaster* is made more difficult by contradictions in the text (see below), a fairly clear picture emerges of the geography of the lands involved when all of the available evidence is analysed.

The Relative Positions of Oldcastle, Kierdale, Tegris, Oakwall and Drystone

The most important section for geographical information in *Shadowmaster* is pages 53-55, where Gereth Yaztromo and the others pore over maps of the area in order to determine whether there is any pattern to the raids. The first thing to note is that the area under consideration lies "between Darkwood and the Moonstones".[1] If we set aside the incorrect geography of Yaztromo's map for the moment, we have the following:



> *"Here is Tegris – I got that right at least. And Kierdale is here, almost due north of it. Here is Oldcastle, of course, and over there, due west of here, that must be... Oakwall..." Yaztromo's voice tailed off. They did not need to hear any more. They all saw it, there, where the imaginary lines their minds drew connecting the four raided villages crossed. Where the unknown cartographer had drawn a small but distinct silhouette of a stylized village... he or she had inscribed the name of the village. 'Drystone'.*[2]

The clear implication here is that the villages Tegris, Kierdale, Oldcastle and Oakwall form four points of a cross, at the centre of which lies Drystone. This may be illustrated as in the scheme to the left.

The description above makes it clear that Tegris, which lies on the Silver River, forms the southern point of this cross, whilst Kierdale, "almost due north of it", forms the northern point.[3] The positions of Oldcastle and Oakwall are more complicated, however. The description just given indicates that Oakwall lies west of Oldcastle and, as such, we should expect it to lie on the left-hand point of the cross in the diagram above, with Oldcastle lying on the right. It appears, however, that this cannot be the case, given the other geographical evidence in *Shadowmaster*.

Perhaps most significantly, Jemar Val describes Kierdale as "two days' hard ride" from Oldcastle, to the north-east.[4] If we combine this with the geographical indications just discussed, we get a lay out of these villages something like the

Art: © Alexander Ballingall, 2010

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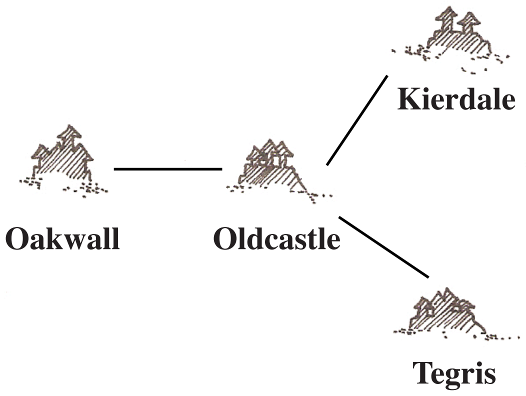
[1] *Shadowmaster* – p.53
[2] *Shadowmaster* – p.55
[3] *Shadowmaster* – p.55
[4] *Shadowmaster* – p.54
[5] *Shadowmaster* – p.28
[6] *Shadowmaster* – p.30
[7] *Shadowmaster* – p.53~54



layout in the map above.

Suddenly the villages no longer form a cross, and the position of Drystone cannot fall on any intersection of the lines connecting them, defeating the whole point of the exercise. How do we resolve this contradiction in *Shadowmaster*? There appear to be two ways to do so:

1. Assume that there is an error in the book, and what Jemar Val should have said is that Kierdale is north-west of Oldcastle. This puts the villages back in a cross configuration once again, with Oakwall in the west and Oldcastle in the east.
2. Assume that there is an error in the book, but that the two instances where it states Oakwall is "west" of Oldcastle should read "east". This would also put the villages back in a cross configuration, this time with Oldcastle in the west and Oakwall in the east.

How do we decide which of these two alternatives is correct? If the evidence from *Shadowmaster* is examined carefully, it appears that only one of these alternatives is really tenable – that Oldcastle lies in the west, and that Oakwall lies in the east (option 2 above). The reasoning is as follows:

1. Yaztromo can see the plume of smoke from the burning Oldcastle.[5] If Oldcastle lies on the eastern point of the cross, this potentially places it further away from his tower than any of the other villages. The fact that it is the first village he decides to visit suggests that it is also the closest. Although Yaztromo says that it is two days' walk to Oldcastle,[6] this need not mean that it is very far away, since he is an old, unfit man (and, as usual, distances in *Fighting Fantasy* are not specified precisely).
2. Although Yaztromo's map of the area is defective, it appears that he has positioned Tegris and Oldcastle correctly. For example, *Shadowmaster* tells us the following: "Here is Oldcastle, where we are meeting today." Yaztromo's finger slid down and to the right across the parchment, until it rested upon another crudely drawn ink spot. "The first raid which I would unhesitatingly attribute to these bandits was upon Tegris, here, by the Silver."[7] This indicates clearly that Tegris lies south-east of Oldcastle, indicating that Oldcastle must be the western point of the cross.
3. Oakwall is described as being among the hills, albeit on Yaztromo's defective map.[8] This suggests that it lies at the eastern point of the cross, in or near the Moonstones, rather than in the west.

None of this fits easily if Oakwall is in the west and Oldcastle is in the east, but makes perfect sense if Oldcastle is in the west and Oakwall is in the east. Since it is a toss up whether the book has two errors indicating that Oakwall is to the west of Oldcastle, or has two errors indicating that Oldcastle is to the west of Kierdale and Tegris, we can only assume that *Shadowmaster* is in error in stating that Oakwall is west of Oldcastle, in light of the other evidence.

The Lowland Gap and Hallon

A number of other geographical indications of interest are given in *Shadowmaster*, in particular those concerning the Lowland Gap and the village Hallon.

In *Shadowmaster*, Oakwall is described as lying "several days beyond the Lowland Gap",[9] whilst Drystone is "perched on the brow of a low hill in the very middle of a wide, wooded valley that was known locally as the Lowland Gap."[10] The name "Lowland Gap" suggests that it is a valley which connects the lowlands south and west of Darkwood and the Moonstones with the hills and forests beyond. There appear to be two possibilities: (1) that the Lowland Gap is the southern entrance to the narrow strip of land between Darkwood and the Moonstones; and (2) that the Lowland Gap is a valley which enters the Moonstones themselves, with the lowlands north of Chalice on the west and the Moonstones on the east.

The village of Hallon is mentioned twice in *Shadowmaster*. Riders from Drystone are "despatched on the road to Chalice ... If they manage to get fresh horses at Hallon and then ride through the night, they will be in Chalice by dawn tomorrow."[11] This indicates that Hallon lies somewhere between Drystone and Chalice or, at least, it lies on the easiest route between them. Chadda Darkmane also passes through Hallon on his way from Port Blacksand to Chalice,[12] and is overtaken by the riders despatched from Drystone.[13] If it is assumed that Darkmane is following the road from the Catfish River to Chalice marked on the map in *Dungeoneer*,[14] then Hallon lies somewhere on this road, or at least not far from it — it is possible that Darkmane has missed the turn for Chalice, which is why he has to ask the villagers of Hallon the way there.

Other Places

A number of other place-names of interest are mentioned in *Shadowmaster*, including Angrim, Wintermere and Gnollwood.[15] Although these names fit with the general nomenclature and culture of the area under discussion, there is nothing in the text of *Shadowmaster* to indicate that they are found in this area and, indeed, they could lie anywhere in Allansia.

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[8] *Shadowmaster* – p.54

[9] *Shadowmaster* – p.54

[10] *Shadowmaster* – p.57

[11] *Shadowmaster* – p.57

[12] *Shadowmaster* – p.58

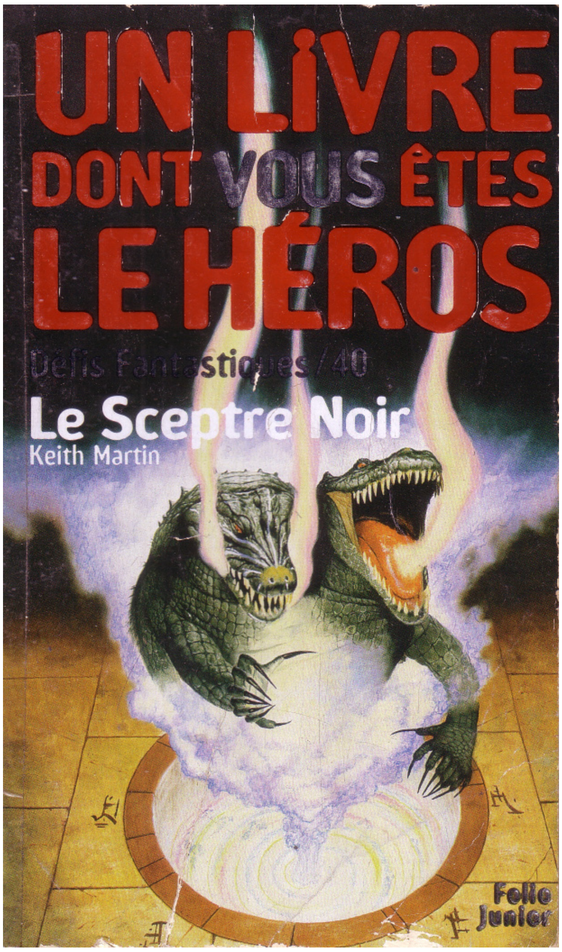
[13] *Shadowmaster* – p.59

[14] *Dungeoneer* – p.33

[15] *Shadowmaster* – p.94

Lost (and Won?) in Translation

In a follow-up to his introduction to the French translations of the *Fighting Fantasy* range, **Julien Meneldur** takes a look at one particular translation and asks the question: "What is going on?"



The Italians have a saying which goes: traduttore, traditore, that is to say: "translator, traitor". Of course, the line between good and bad translations is thin and blurry, and may vary according to one's tastes and opinions about the liberties that may be taken when passing from a language to another. As I said in my brief overview of French history of *Fighting Fantasy*, it looks like most translators didn't give too much thought about these books for children; yet there were some who put real heart into their work.

Camille Fabien is one of them. He didn't just translate the books: he really added something to them, polishing their style, adding some clever interpolations to immerse you more in the story than did the originals (let's face it: most *Fighting Fantasy* authors have writing skills that range from bad to horrendous). I do not think the *Lone Wolf* books could have had the same effect over so many French-speaking readers, had someone else translated the first four ones. And yet, Camille Fabien is also responsible for one of the most mind-boggling treacheries of original material I have seen to date.

After some five years without being involved in *Fighting Fantasy* (his last translation was *Talisman of Death* in 1985), Fabien was called back in 1990 to work on *Master of Chaos*, number forty-one of the series, which became *Le Sceptre Noir*, number forty in French numbering (for unclear reasons). What I said about his general qualities stands still: the French text is much richer and less lapidary that Keith Martin's original. Emblematic of this is Fabien's reference to classical theatre by quoting word-for-word (in 140) the famous alliterative verse "ces serpents qui sifflent sur vos têtes" from Racine's *Andromaque*! But what kills the book is what happened to the proper names.

I cannot imagine what went through Fabien's mind during the translation. Maybe he was drunk. Maybe he had made a bet with one of his friends. Maybe he wanted to test the reviewers at Gallimard. Simply put, it looks like his goal was to insert in the book as many horrible puns as he could.

So, the Black Continent of Khul becomes *Koulgrah*, which sounds like "coule-gras" (≈ *flow-grease*). The ruined city of Kabesh becomes *Klakduhr* ("claque-dur" ≈ *hard-chattering*), yet for some reason Ashkyos remains untouched. Character names are not spared, however: the arch-enemy, Shanzikuul, becomes *Shanfeu-Hankor* ("j'en veux encore" ≈ *I want some more*). Ashkyos's dictator, Marshal Lakatos, becomes *Levtö Labouath* ("lève-tôt la boîte" ≈ *early morning for work*), the pirate captain Grotniss is rechristened *Transhcek* ("tranche-sec" ≈ *sharp-slit*), and the sorcerer Kanestin becomes *Kanyan-Happu* ("quand y en a plus", which is usually followed by "y en a encore", the whole being more or less equivalent to "it's not over till it's over"). Vardrath the Necromancer becomes *Föhrmoll le Nécropathe* ("formol" is French for formaldehyde, which may be appropriated for a necromancer, but still...). In the same vein, it is no more surprise to see the merchant of camels Bokhannon being now called *Belboss* ("belle bosse" ≈ *pretty hump*), or the decaying ship *Smeraglion* taking on the much more appropriate name of *Khrou-Land* ("croulant" = *decrepit*).

Fabien even indulges in making a nod to one of his previous translations: between his hands, *Sorcery!*'s Minimite had become a *Marmouscule*, and there we find, in Klakduhr's ruins, a book written by some *Maar-Mouss-Khüll* (Ssassuzlit in the original).

Vesper the thief and Jesper the mongoose, whose names may have been deemed too similar, become *Tutu Peyumpo* ("tu payes un pot" ≈ *you pay a drink*) and *Giovanni Roberto Galloti* (why an Italian name, for Libra's sake?) respectively. This talking mongoose is however the character which benefits the most from the translation: Fabien adds lively dialogue (including some witty retorts about mongooses' genders) which makes him an endearing companion, and it is all the more hard to abandon him to Baalberith the Savant. Or should I say *Baal-Dematttsh* ("balle de match" = *match point*)? Fabien seems to have been a huge tennis fan, since Baalberith's father, Qaaniqqatsi, becomes *Baal-Desetth* (balle de set = *set point*). And when I say "huge", I mean "HUGE": he even goes on adding a new character, *Paas-Hingshotth* ("passing-shot", that's the same in French), just to make one more pun about tennis!

The strangest thing in all this mess is that when I first read *Le Sceptre Noir*, I was still in the target audience for *Fighting Fantasy* books (said otherwise: I must have been 11 or 12). And I did not get any of these puns. I just enjoyed a good gamebook, well-written, quite well-balanced (though the beginning was tough for small STAMINAS) and overall a very pleasing one – actually, it's still one of my top-ten *Fighting Fantasy*. So there is still forgiveness in my heart for the traditore Camille Fabien.

Sitting down and eating a meal isn't perhaps the most exciting part of a *Fighting Fantasy* adventure compared to bartering for rare flora with a wizened herbalist. This article by **Seb Forder** combines the two, making mealtimes a trifle more palatable.

"You want Thricewort with that?"

There are eleven special worts purchasable from herbalists and when used to season provisions restore combinations of STAMINA, SKILL and LUCK, along with the normal 4 STAMINA points gained from eating the meal. The dubiously-named Knavewort, Ogrewort and Ravenwort increase combinations of STAMINA and SKILL but with the adventurer losing a LUCK point.

In their natural state all the worts look alike and have a similar pungent smell and bitter taste that remain even after processing. Only a veteran herbalist would be able to identify, harvest and prepare them properly. (The "Coins" column shows the typical prices expected from such a herbalist.) A lowly adventurer cannot just pick a handful of wort sprigs, add them to his meal and expect the herbal benefits; other than having an unpleasant seasoning with his meal nothing will happen.

Roll	Name	STAMINA	SKILL	LUCK	Coins	Colour
2	BLADEWORT	0	+1	0	two	blue
3	FATEWORT	0	0	+1	two	violet
4	GOREWORT	+1	0	0	two	red
5	KNAVEWORT	0	+1	-1	one	brown
6	KNIGHTWORT	+1	+1	0	four	yellow
7	OGREWORT	+1	0	-1	one	green
8	RAVENWORT	+1	+1	-1	three	black
9	SLYWORT	*random*	*random*	*random*	three	grey
10	THRICEWORT	+1	+1	+1	five	white
11	VALORWORT	0	+1	+1	four	indigo
12	VIGORWORT	+1	0	+1	four	orange

Random: The other dubiously-named wort is Slywort; so called as it offers no guarantee of restoring lost points. When eaten with provisions roll three dice; one for STAMINA, one for SKILL and one for LUCK. If the die roll is even then that attribute has a point restored but if the result is odd then nothing happens.

When processed correctly worts go from their light greenish hue to a distinctive colour that helps both herbalist and adventurer know what type of wort it is. (Shown in the "Colour" column.)

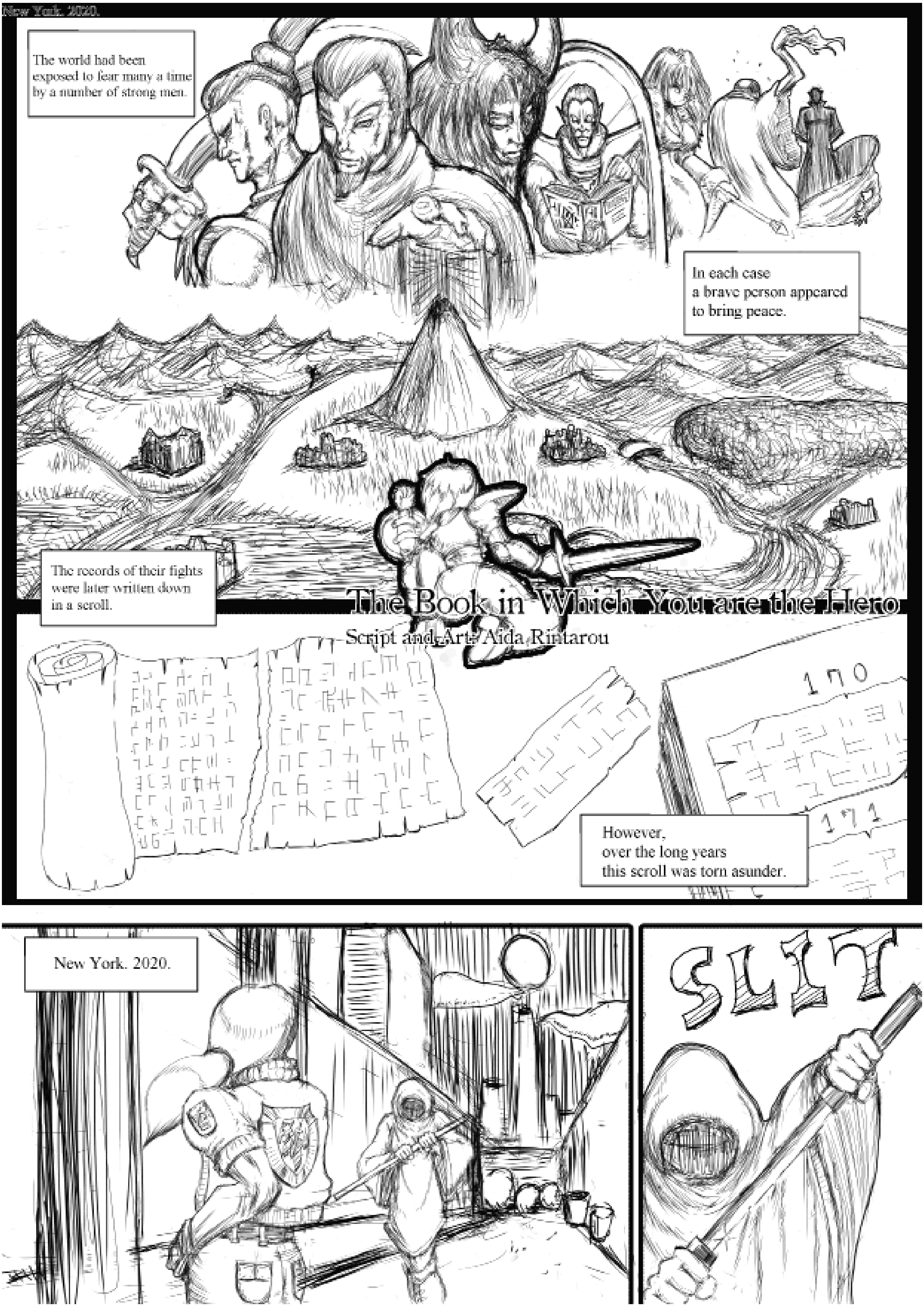
Multiple worts cannot be combined. Having a meal with Bladewort, Fatewort and Gorewort is not the same as having a meal with Thricewort. Similarly, having a meal with Ravenwort and Fatewort does not cancel out the Ravenwort's imposed LUCK point loss. If multiple worts are combined with a meal then neither will work and the adventurer has just wasted an opportunity to recuperate; although he will get the normal 4 points of STAMINA restored from eating provisions.

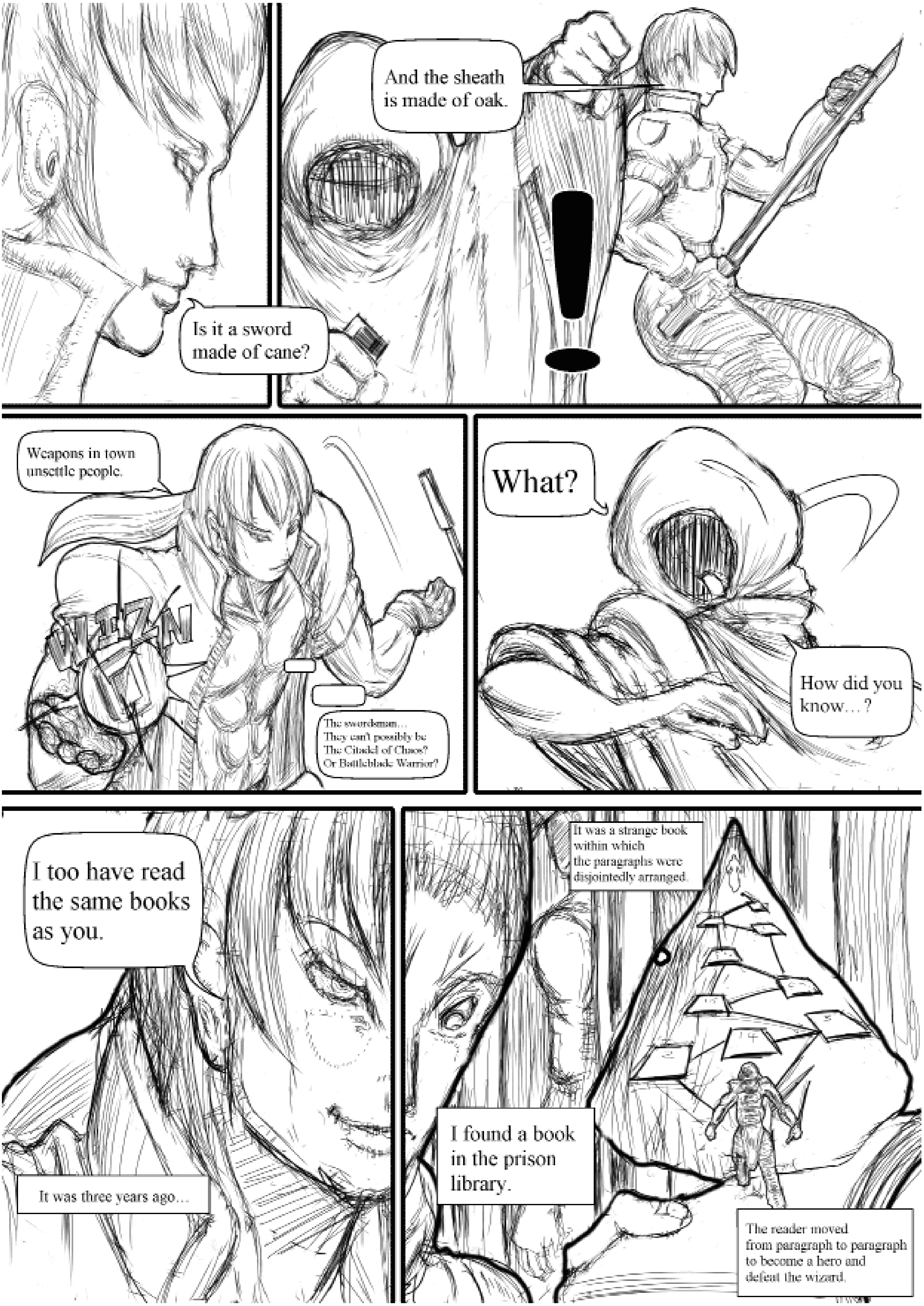
The worts cannot be eaten beneficially without provisions. Doing so just leaves a stubbornly bitter taste in the mouth.

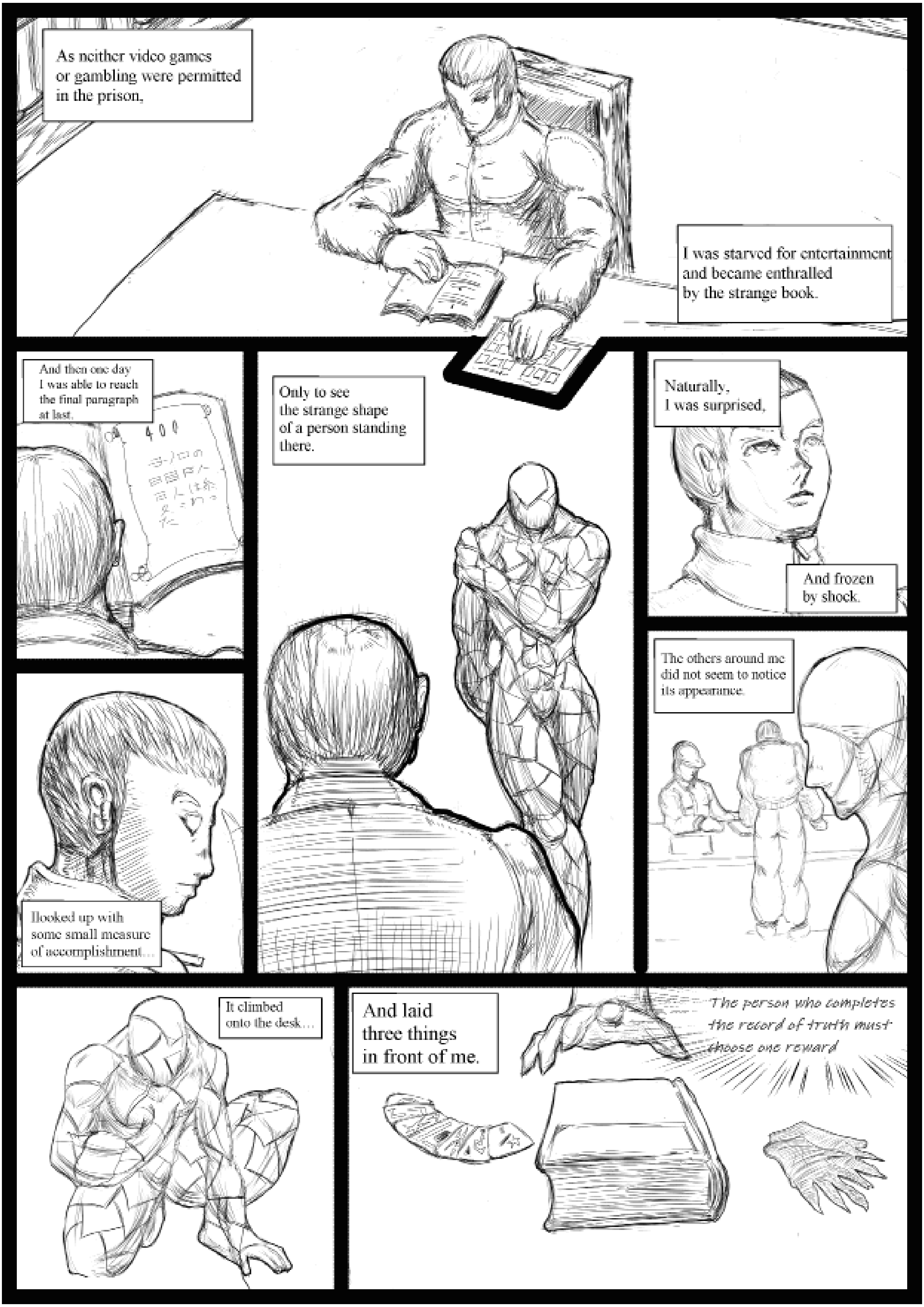
The worts work even if an attribute cannot be modified. A wounded adventurer with zero LUCK points still benefits STAMINA-wise from eating Ogrewort even though his LUCK cannot decrease further. Similarly, a wounded adventurer with initial SKILL points benefits STAMINA-wise from eating Knightwort even though his SKILL cannot increase. While an adventurer eating Fatewort with initial LUCK points would be foolishly pointless.

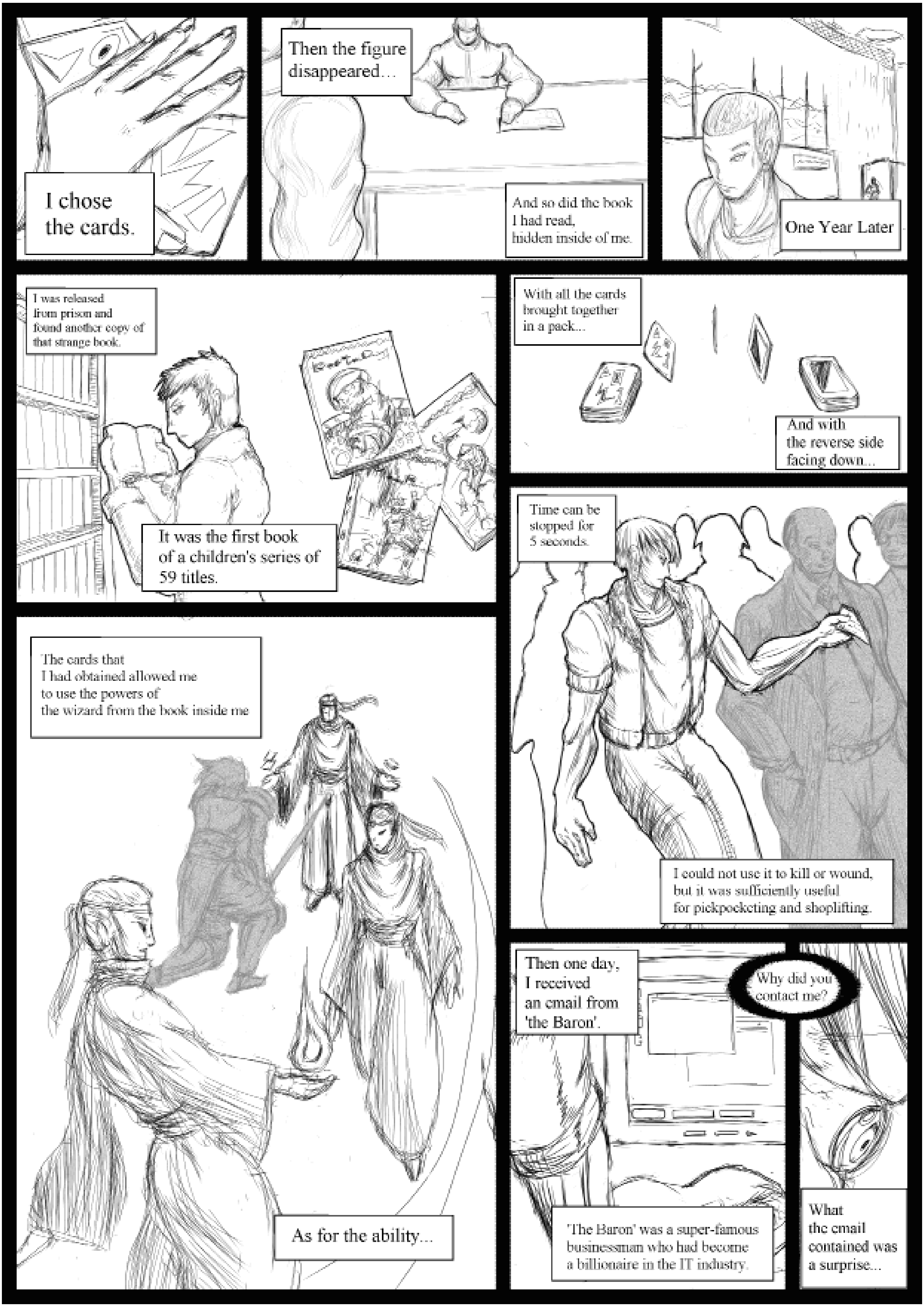
Jesterwort is another variant and like the others has a pungent smell, bitter taste and light greenish hue, but when processed it randomly turns into the colour of one of the other worts. However, when eaten with provisions it does nothing. An unscrupulous herbalist may palm Jesterwort off as something else, especially if it has turned grey and can be sold as the fickle Slywort that guarantees no bonus. After all, an adventurer unwittingly seasoning his provisions with Jesterwort is less likely to survive a monster-riddled dungeon and return to ask for a refund.

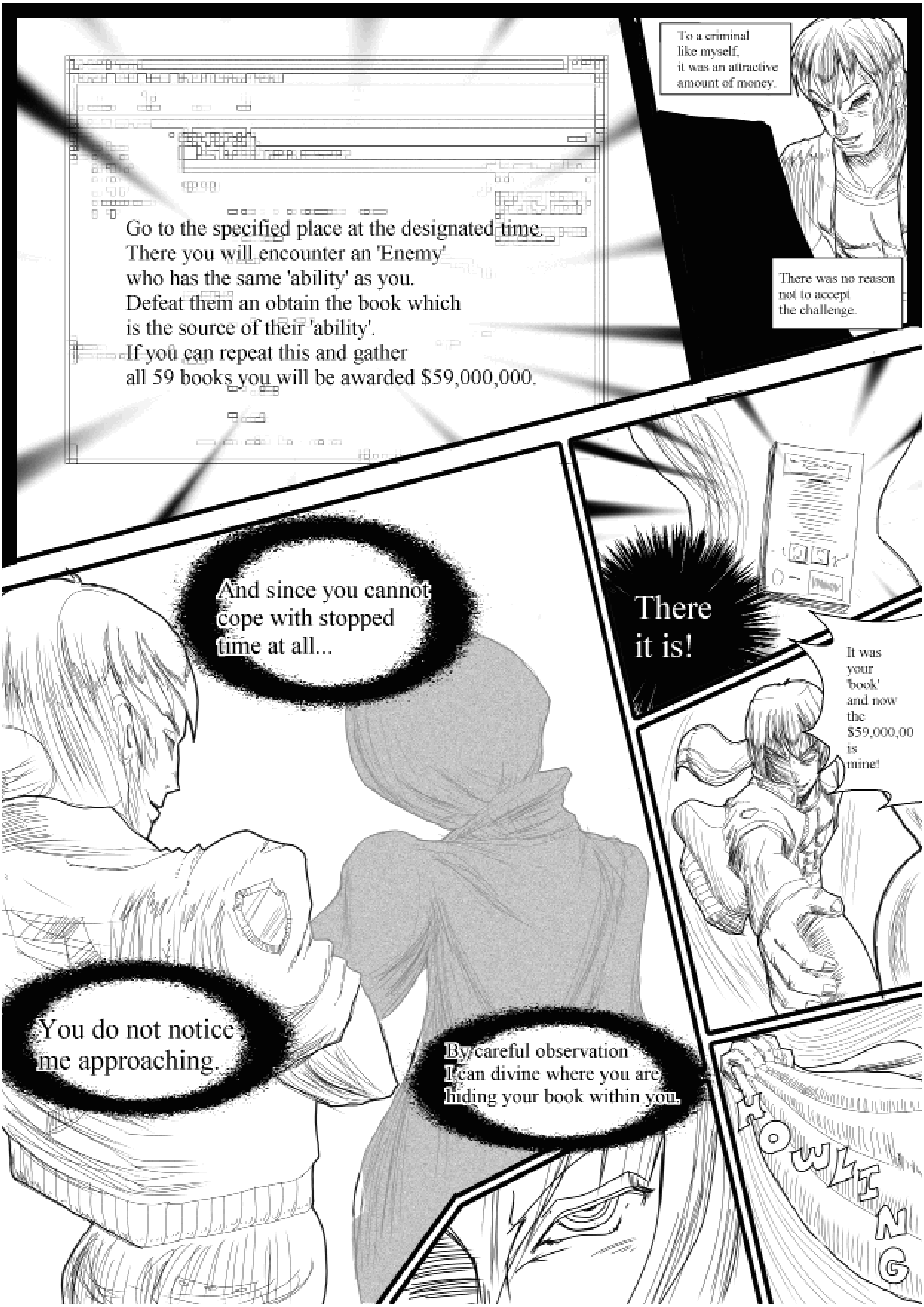
Art: © Victor Cheng, 2010

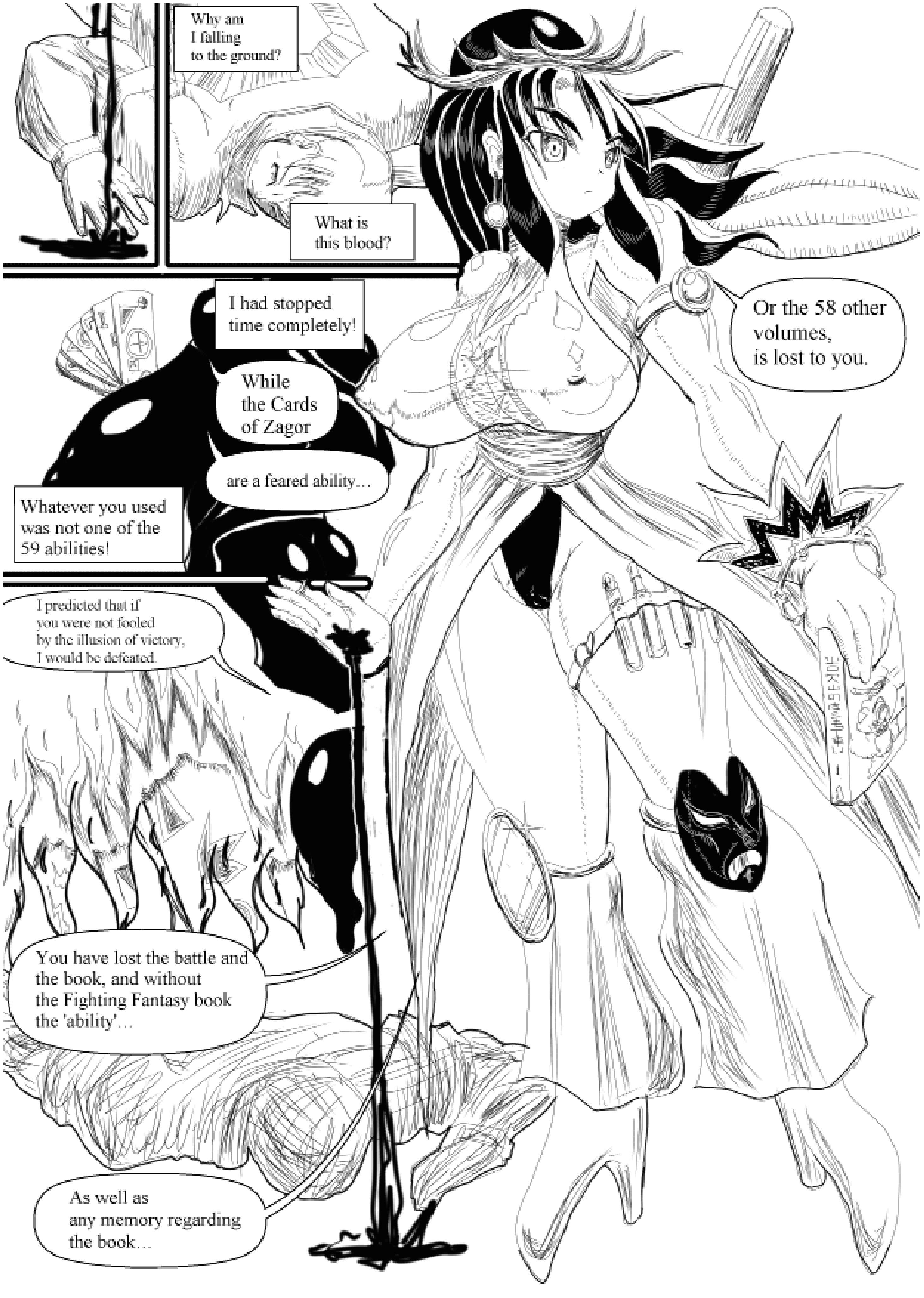

New York. 2020.
The world had been exposed to fear many a time by a number of strong men.
In each case a brave person appeared to bring peace.
The records of their fights were later written down in a scroll.
The Book in Which You are the Hero
Script and Art: Aida Rintarou
170
171
However, over the long years this scroll was torn asunder.
New York. 2020.
SLIT


Is it a sword made of cane?
And the sheath is made of oak.
Weapons in town unsettle people.
The swordsman… They can't possibly be The Citadel of Chaos? Or Battleblade Warrior?
What?
How did you know…?
I too have read the same books as you.
It was three years ago…
I found a book in the prison library.
It was a strange book within which the paragraphs were disjointedly arranged.
The reader moved from paragraph to paragraph to become a hero and defeat the wizard.

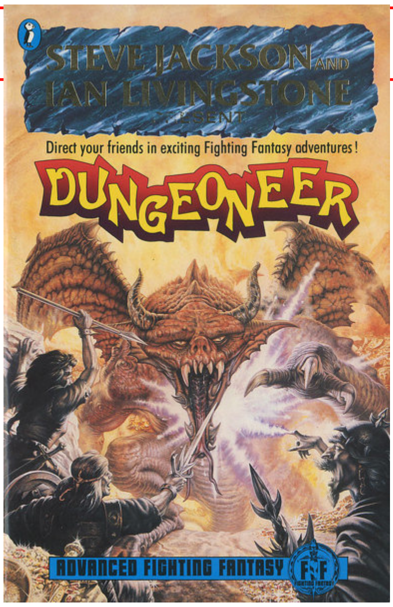

As neither video games or gambling were permitted in the prison,
I was starved for entertainment and became enthralled by the strange book.
And then one day I was able to reach the final paragraph at last.
400
Ilooked up with some small measure of accomplishment…
Only to see the strange shape of a person standing there.
Naturally, I was surprised,
And frozen by shock.
The others around me did not seem to notice its appearance.
It climbed onto the desk…
And laid three things in front of me.
The person who completes the record of truth must choose one reward


I chose the cards.
Then the figure disappeared…
And so did the book I had read, hidden inside of me.
One Year Later
I was released from prison and found another copy of that strange book.
It was the first book of a children's series of 59 titles.
With all the cards brought together in a pack...
And with the reverse side facing down...
Time can be stopped for 5 seconds.
I could not use it to kill or wound, but it was sufficiently useful for pickpoekcting and shoplifting.
The cards that I had obtained allowed me to use the powers of the wizard from the book inside me
As for the ability...
Then one day, I received an email from 'the Baron'.
Why did you contact me?
'The Baron' was a super-famous businessman who had become a billionaire in the IT industry.
What the email contained was a surprise...


Go to the specified place at the designated time.
There you will encounter an 'Enemy'
who has the same 'ability' as you.
Defeat them an obtain the book which
is the source of their 'ability'.
If you can repeat this and gather
all 59 books you will be awarded $59,000,000.
To a criminal like myself, it was an attractive amount of money.
There was no reason not to accept the challenge.
And since you cannot cope with stopped time at all...
You do not notice me approaching.
By careful observation I can divine where you are hiding your book within you.
There it is!
It was your 'book' and now the $59,000,00 is mine!
HOWING


Why am I falling to the ground?
What is this blood?
I had stopped time completely!
While the Cards of Zagor
are a feared ability…
Whatever you used was not one of the 59 abilities!
I predicted that if you were not fooled by the illusion of victory, I would be defeated.
You have lost the battle and the book, and without the Fighting Fantasy book the 'ability'…
As well as any memory regarding the book…
Or the 58 other volumes, is lost to you.

SPOILER WARNING: **Plot spoilers for *Dungeoneer*!**


STEVE JACKSON AND IAN LIVINGSTONE PRESENT
Direct your friends in exciting Fighting Fantasy adventures!
DUNGEONEER
ADVANCED FIGHTING FANTASY

Ever sat and stared at your copies of the original *Fighting Fantasy* RPG books or the later *AFF* editions? Ever wondered what it might be like to actually get a group of friends together to play such adventures? **Adrian Young** presents an actual account of just such a *Fighting Fantasy* RPG campaign, featuring real Player Characters and outcomes from an adventure played over three four-hour sessions.

CHRONICLE OF HEROES:

Revenge of the Sorcerer

King Salamon the 57th welcomed the conquering Heroes with open arms. The three Fighters Tetra, Sir Marcellos and El Ravell; the wizard Elantro; the Elven Ranger Alexa; and the young apprentice wizard Dappa. The wise and respected King of Salamonis was most grateful for the safe return of his daughter Sarissa, and pleased at the news that the evil sorcerer Xortan Throg had been vanquished (for the interim). He paid the Heroes a handsome sum of Gold plus another sum of coin equal to the reward offered by King Pindar! Such generosity. He also granted them free food and lodgings while in Salamonis and exemption from any taxes and fees, in spite of the opposition voiced by the King's son Prince Salamon. The Heroes took full advantage of the King's gracious hospitality, storing their acquired sums of gold in the secure Salamonis coffers and living like kings, albeit for one night. Although the Prince had a dislike of the Heroes, King Salamon offered Ravell a post in his Salamonian Army. Princess Sarissa also asked Sir Marcellos to stay on as a royal bodyguard. Tetra was offered a position protecting the Temples of Asrel by Archbishop Kalivan. But they all respectfully declined. Alexa and Elantro were not as renowned as their counterparts and as such no offers were made.

Dappa decided he had had enough of the adventuring life, having accompanied the heroes on the Riddling Reaver and Tower of the Sorcerer, and accepted a paid ship ride back to his home in Kallamehr. The Heroes held a huge party in honour of their trusty sidekick Dappa and also wrote letters for him to take back to Lady Carolina and their magic user ally Herme. In the morning they were summoned before King Salamon and offered another princely some to finish what they had begun at the Tower. Their mission would be to seek and destroy Xortan Throg once and for all. But where was Throg hiding? The King advised them to seek the powerful wizard Nicodemus, who lived in the vile Port known as Blacksand. The King's spy, Halim Thrumbar, would help them once inside. So off they went, under the guise of a

Art: © Nathan Stones, 2010

merchant caravan. After a long but uneventful trek, the party arrived at the festering cesspool that was Port Blacksand – home to pirates, cut-throats and some of the vilest creatures known in Titan.

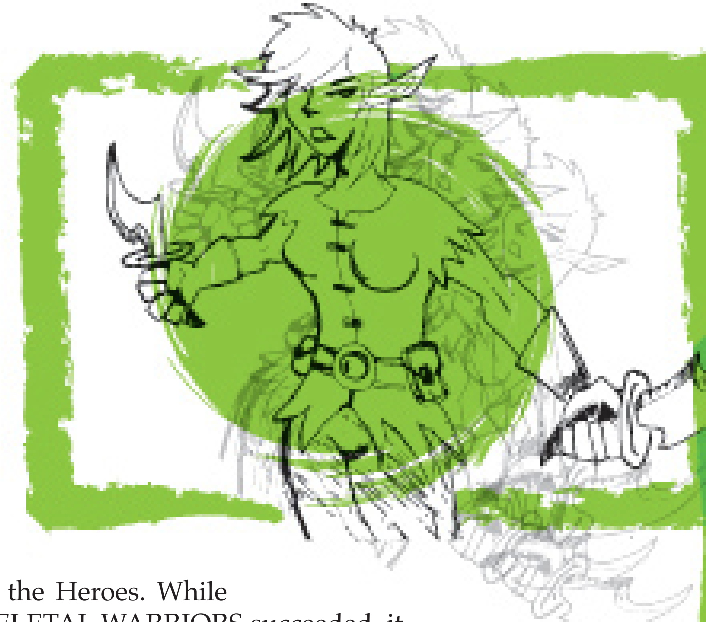
Ravell tricked the two disgusting TROLLS that guarded the Blacksand Main Gates by saying they were transporting goods for Lord Azzur himself. Then it was straight through to the Merchant District to meet Halim Thrumbar at the Dragons Tooth Inn (although Marcellos did consider taking on a boasting Swordsman calling himself Veldik in the Market Square). After a few ales, a chin wag with the landlord Gregor, and a dodgy game of Cats Eye with some Locals, it was "Welcome to Blacksand" with ye traditional Bar Brawl. The usual chairs, mugs, dishes, goblins, back stabbing and mayhem ensued. Eventually, with the threat of the Black Guard approaching, the Heroes were bundled out by Halim. The wily contact accepted their caravan as payment for information on Nicodemus and directed the party to a hut under the Singing Bridge.

The Singing Bridge arched over Blacksand's sewer infested Catfish River. Despite the large KEEP OUT inscribed on the door, the Heroes persisted and Nicodemus emerged. 'Perhaps you've heard of me,' began Marcellos. The wily wizard sniggered and invited them all in. Alexa and Tetra guarded outside and were treated to all the vile and decrepit sights and smells that made Blacksand such a tourist attraction. Inside, Nicodemus spoke of how Xortan Throg was assembling an undead army in a hideout in the sewers, right under Blacksand itself, somewhere amongst the maze of tunnels which belonged to old Carsepolis (the Great City and once capital of Allansia that was destroyed by Chaos during the War of the Wizards nearly 300 years ago). Elantro asked if Nicodemus could provide them with any magic. 'I don't trust magic,' scoffed Ravell. Nicodemus said he had nothing that could help them apart from rum (which he didn't want to share) and healing soup (which they had all finished). So into the dark Sewers the heroes descended.

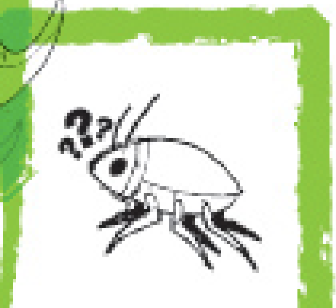
The party entered the Sewer via the sluice gates under Lobster Wharf. Elantro made Rav invisible so he could follow some PIRATES carrying large chests who happened to also be making their way into the sewers. But the spell soon lapsed, exposing Rav to an angry group of PIRATES, a squad of trident wielding FISH MEN and an emerging GIANT CENTIPEDE searching for its next meal. The brave Rav was pinned down by the weight of opposing numbers, and the rest of the Heroes had to come to Rav's aid. After a terrific battle in the sewers, the Heroes suffered a rare defeat and were forced back out of the sewers! Slightly embarrassed at their retreat but nonetheless undaunted, the adventurers recuperated and re-entered the nauseating sewer complex. This time Rav, Marcellos and Elantro went first. Tetra and Alexa protected the rear. Bypassing the CENTIPEDE'S lair the front party came across a pillared recess. Ambush! FISH MEN again, this time with nets as well as tridents. All the heroes became ensnared except Ravell who counter-attacked at his rampaging best. Elantro and Marcellos copped their fair share of spear wounds before Alexa and Tetra got free and joined the fray. In a tight contest, it was the FISH MEN who were forced to flee his time. As the party regrouped and tended to their wounds, a GHOST appeared.

The GHOST was Sargon, once High Priest of old Carsepolis, who had been forced to roam the sewers forever as a spirit. The Heroes struck a deal. They would retrieve for Sargon the Crystal of Power so that he would become real again. In return, Sargon would explain where to find, and more importantly how to kill, Xortan Throg. So Sargon cast a Mind Map of the sewers on Ravell. Rav then guided the rest of the heroes to a secret entrance that led to the Temple of Hydana. The party stormed the Temple and encountered a FISH PRIEST and FISH MAN GUARDS. In the frantic battle that ensued, Elantro cast Restrain to hold the PRIEST at bay and then seized the Crystal, while the others engaged the surprisingly tough FISH GUARD troop. Alexa was surrounded and nearly killed, but her Tetra, Rav and Marcellos were too powerful and soon the battle was over. Marcellos had to be dissuaded by the others from taking some of the Temple's treasures (a golden sword and golden goblets) so in the end they made it back to Sargon with just the Crystal.

SARGON touched the Crystal and was immediately returned to his earthly form. Grateful, he explained that the Crystal would deflect the most powerful magic back onto its caster. Sargon warned them that Xortan was able to summon Death Spells. If they could geode Xortan into casting this, they could use the Crystal to reflect the Death spell back onto THROG! Tetra decided to go back to Nicodemus to explain what was happening and warn him of Xortan's plans should the Heroes fail. She bid goodbye and good luck to her friends as Sargon cast another mind map on Ravell. SARGON then vanished and Rav navigated the party (minus Tetra) through the sewers to a tunnel submerged under the putrid water. Emerging through the other side, the Heroes were faced with hundreds of SKELETON WARRIORS guarding tall ornate iron doors! It was like déjà vu (the Replicanth battle in the Riddling Reaver), except the skeletons this time were wearing armour, and Marcellos didn't have his Mechanical Armour! Elantro cast two Walls of Fire as the Skeleton Warriors advanced, mindlessly trying to pass through the magical flame to get to the Heroes. While some of the SKELETAL WARRIORS succeeded, it was only far enough to meet the combined blades of the Terrible Two – Marcellos & Ravell. Everything seemed to be going well, as the pile of smashed bones grew higher! Until Elantro and Alexa were suddenly overcome by the poisoned barbs of a TENTACLED THING that had emerged from the watery shaft behind them. Elantro was stung into action and immediately cast a Stone Spell followed up by a Shatter spell that destroyed the THING before it could fully entrap and kill them. With the last of the SKELETONS dispatched, the party moved through the large doors.

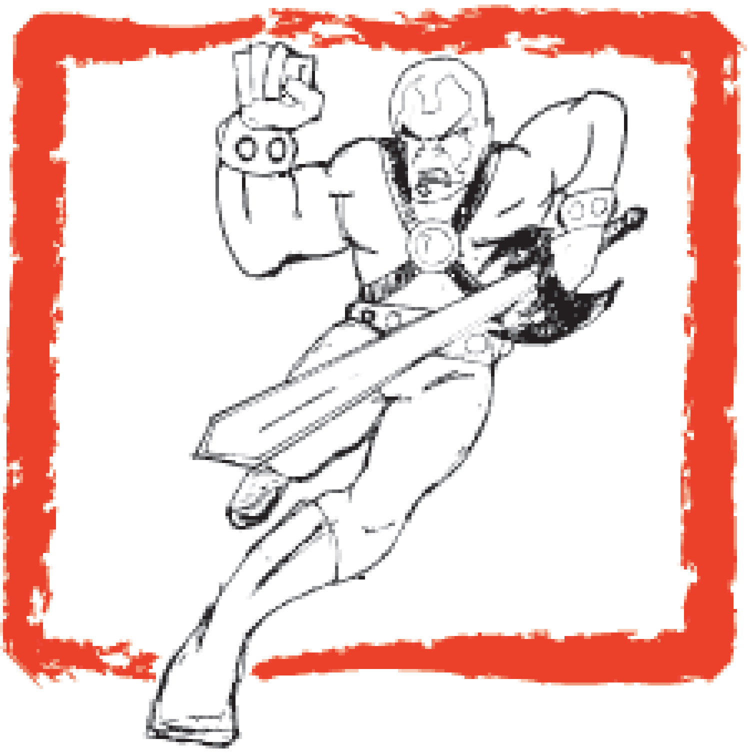


The doors opened into a giant courtyard that housed a monstrous SKELETAL TYRANNOSAURUS. It thundered towards the gob-smacked party, snapping its jagged teethed jaws as the heroes dispersed in all directions. As it chased Rav, Elantro again cast a Stone spell and paralysed one of the Tyrannosaurus' legs, making it topple to the ground. Marcellos then charged the REX with the Sword of Timakron, and sliced through the second leg of the behemoth, crippling and immobilizing it. One more set of huge double doors and the final confrontation was upon them! Waiting for them, just as he did in his Tower before, was the evil wizard himself, XORTAN THROG. Impressed, though still terribly cocky, THROG expounded his plan to recreate another SKELETAL ARMY, join up with a rebel PIRATE fleet, and take over Blacksand. Once he was ruler of the City of Thieves, his combined army of Evil would march on Salamonis... then all of Allansia! The Heroes retorted with a nice set of insults about THROG'S ugly face and something about hiding in a sewer, and then Elantro challenged THROG to cast his most powerful Spell to prove how powerful he was. And that's all it took. XORTAN THROG screamed in furious anger, 'YOU WILL ALL DIE!', and conjured the darkest and most frightening spell in a necromancer's book – the Death Spell. In an instant, a black arc of crackling energy jetted towards Elantro. Our heroic wizard was ready, as the others looked on in anticipation. Elantro flashed

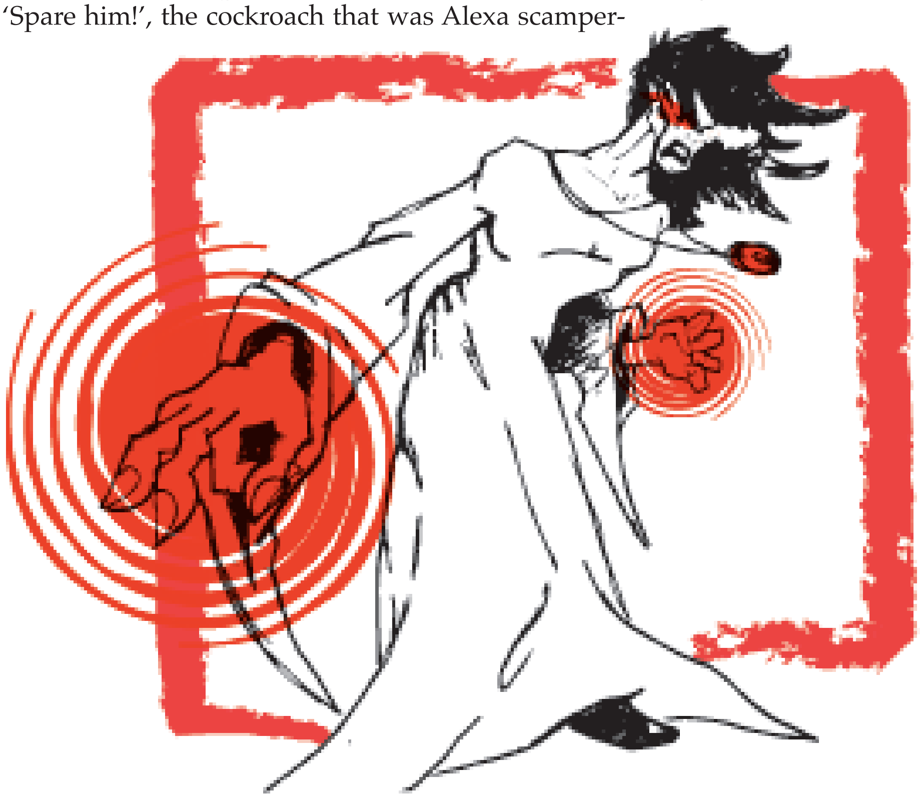


the Crystal from beneath his gown... BUT TOO LATE. The Death spell found its mark, and the black bolt of death slammed into his chest, and Elantro and all his possessions were reduced to dust!

Now they were in trouble! Their plan, as Elantro, was in ruins! Alexa fired off a volley of arrows at THROG but they bounced off him like raindrops. Marcellos tried to flank the evil Necromancer but a Restrain spell cast by THROG rooted Marcellos to the spot. More horrifically, Sir Marcellos began to turn to stone! Second by second, from the feet upwards, soon all that would be left of the once mighty Marcellos would be a commemorative stone statue! All looked lost. Desperate, Marcellos drew his dusty jar of spiders from his backpack (that he procured long ago from the Tower of Rangor in Kallamehr) and hurled them at the wizard. But with the wave of a hand, THROG hurled the jar back at Marcellos, who caught it (quite comical actually). ‘We’re all gonna die,’ yelled Ravell, as he drew his sword and charged forwards. THROG was cackling more maniacally than ever before, and was focussed on Alexis, who had also drawn her sword in preparation to attack. But as she did, another bolt of darkness flew from Xortan’s fingertips, hitting Alexa and reducing her to an insignificant Cockroach in an instant!



Xortan’s power knew no bounds but it was matched by Ravell’s rage. As the last hope of the fledgling heroes, Rav managed to sweep into close range and struck at THROG. His sword planted deeply into THROG, sending blood gushing... again and again and again. Xortan tried desperately to weave a spell but Rav’s berserker attack was relentless. Within an inch of death at the hands of the rampaging Rav, Xortan gargled Mercy and begged a deal. “Spare me and I will help your friends.” With the partial stone statue of Marcellos shouting, ‘Spare him!’, the cockroach that was Alexa scampering about his feet and a pile of dust that was Elantro sitting silently behind him, Ravell halted his frenzy. THROG started with Marcellos, and the petrification began to reverse. But this distraction was all the evil necromancer required. Immediately he followed his good deed with a Mind Spell on Rav... but this last ditch act of evil failed. Ravell shook his head and thrust his sword up through the ribs and out the throat of their vile nemesis. It was done! Xortan Throg was dead.



Marcellos transformation to stone completely reversed, but unfortunately Elantro remained as a pile of dust and the Elf Alexa scuttled away to spend the rest of her days as an insignificant bug. Rav and Marcellos stood. Exhausted. Silent. A mark of respect to their fallen adventurers. Rav broke the silence first, ‘Once again the strength of steel triumphs over sorcery.’ Marcellos followed, ‘They did so much to get us this far. But did you see me catch the jar. I can’t wait to tell everyone about how WE defeated THROG. Soon all of Allansia will know my name.’ Rav shook his head disapprovingly. Nonetheless, the evil that was Xortan Throg was defeated. Marcellos loaded up with yet more items of treasure and Rav grabbed Throg’s fabled Necromantic spell book (to give to Nicodemus). The two fighters then trudged their way back through the sewer complex and to the surface. Breathing in the fresh air, they rejoined Nicodemus and Tetra, who were already in a merry way amongst empty caskets of rum! Together they celebrated the victory, and drank away the sorrows of the fallen. FF

CHAPTER ONE

The *Breath of Pangara* had made good headway using a strong Westerly wind from Bei-Han across the Glimmering Sea when the lookout atop the rigging on the main mast cried, 'Land ho.' The Port of Agra rapidly came into view as a backdrop to the numerous merchant rigs and fishing boats that dotted the coastline. Within the hour the *Breath of Pangara* had docked and Raven had bid farewell to the crew and given the Captain's hand a firm shake. Wickerman had told him he was welcome on his ship anytime.

Having left the harbour area, Raven decided it would be best to make for a smaller town south of Agra as it was exceedingly likely that Lee would have men sailing across the Glimmering Sea in hot pursuit. If he remembered well, there a couple of towns about half a day's walk away; Manta and Lykee. At Lykee he could get on a ship to Alkemis where he could hopefully make some gold to get passage to Port Blacksand. It was about time he headed back to northern Allansia.

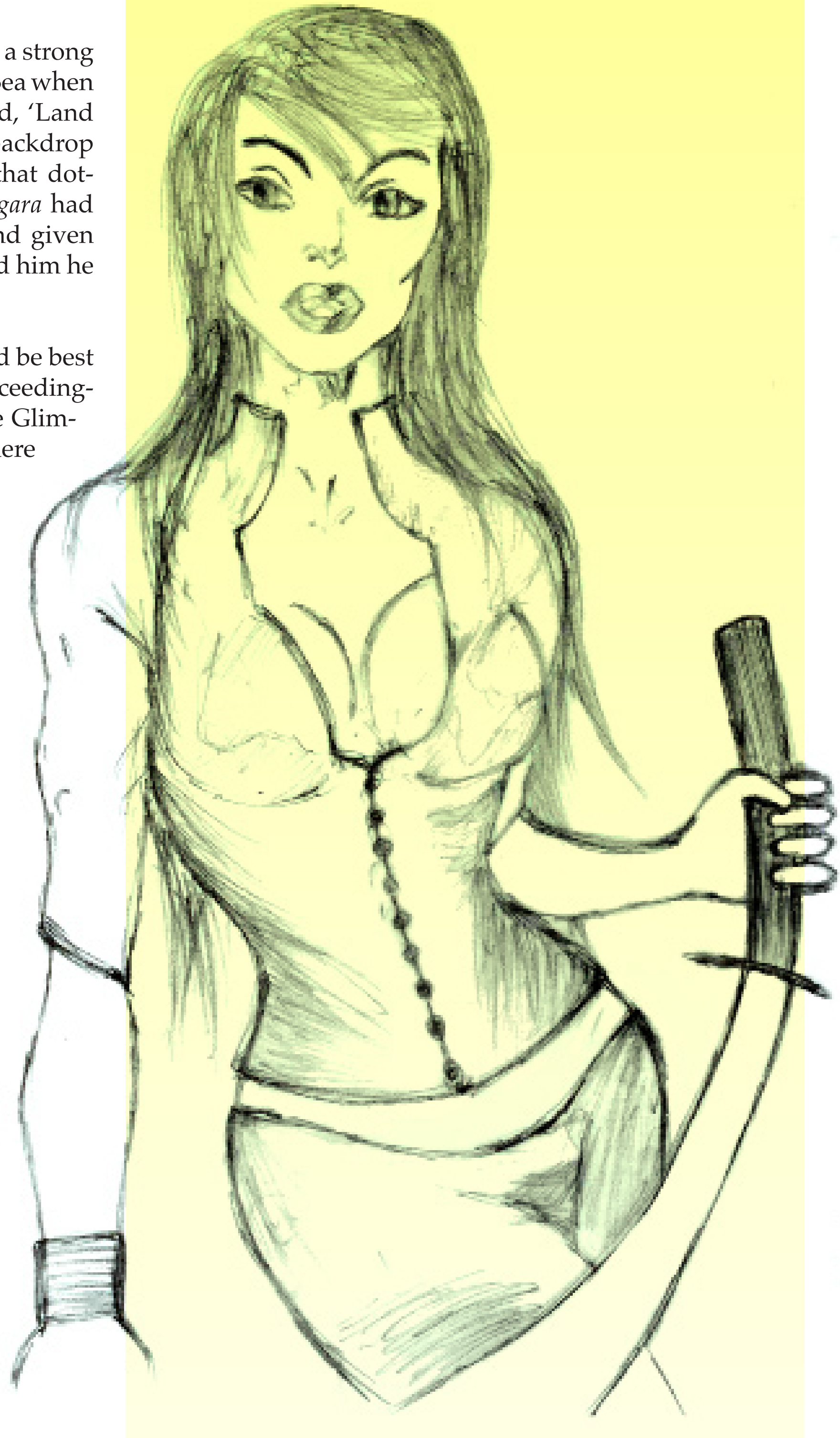
Agra was as busy a city as Bei-Han, perhaps more so. Masses of people were wandering the streets as Raven headed towards the Southern Gate. He really wanted to stop and rest a bit longer than the few hours he had managed to sleep on the *Breath of Pangara*, but any lengthy delay might cost him his life. With one gem he managed to get himself a fairly well crafted dagger that he tucked into his belt. It would be unlikely that he would face any trouble on the road to Lykee, but it would be foolish to travel anywhere unarmed.

***

'I'd like a room for the night.'

The Inn's octogenarian female owner nodded and barked a reply. 'Two gold pieces will get you a good bed and supper.'

Raven nodded and offered the outstretched wizened hand two gold pieces. When he had first arrived in Lykee he had managed to trade the gem for thirty-five gold pieces. It was worth about sixty, but in desperate need of money he had accepted the offer. 'Know anyone who sails for Alkemis?'



AELOUS RAVEN AND THE WRATH OF THE SEA-WITCH

by Ian Brocklehurst

Illustrated by Eleftheria Salamaliki © 2010

The Innkeeper nodded, but said nothing. Raven smiled a little at her impassive features and quizzed her further. 'Their names?'

'One gold,' her wizened had opened again for a donation.

'I see,' replied Raven, tacitly. 'Guess I'll just ask around the quay tomorrow morning.'

The old woman suddenly broke into a laugh. 'Ah, mister you can't blame a poor old girl for trying her luck at earning another gold coin. Don't get much business at this time of the year. I'd get to the quay at sun-up and ask for Will Harpoon.'

'Will Harpoon?' repeated Raven.

'Aye, Will Harpoon is a good lad and sails to Alkemis and back most days usually with traders for the Southern markets. His father did the same for thirty odd years. Came from Zengis did his father...'

'I've visited Zengis once, 'interrupted Raven, politely. 'It's bitterly cold there in the winter. So, where's my room?'

The old woman pointed towards the curtained doorway to her left. 'Take the third room on the right through there.'

'Key?'

The Innkeeper flashed her eyes indicating 'no' as was the local habit. 'There's an iron bar in the room that fits through the rungs on the back of the door. You'll sleep quite soundly. There's rarely any problems round here unless of course you're planning to cause some trouble yourself, mister?'

'Supper?' Raven chose to ignore the 'trouble' comment.

'Dinner bell will be sounded in about an hour. Seafood's our speciality. My daughter Valeria's a fine cook.'

'Good, good,' answered Raven with a beaming smile 'Thanks for your help.' He dropped another gold piece on the counter as he walked away towards his room.

***

Raven was down by Lykee's quay before the sun had started to rise. He had found Will Harpoon who was the proud owner of ship called the *Storm Giant*. For seven gold pieces he had agreed to add Raven to the manifest of passengers travelling to Alkemis. Those who had already paid their fare stood to one side watching Harpoon's crewmen take aboard the ship several crates of spices and cloths destined for the markets of Alkemis.

Raven noticed that among the large group of merchants he would be accompanying on the *Storm Giant* there was a prepubescent daughter to one of them. His eyes next spotted a ponytailed female adventurer clad in men's trousers and a shirt cut at the sleeves with a bosom stretching the fabric to breaking point given the lack of buttons doing it up; her formidable physique and multiple earrings on her right ear suggested she was born an Amazon. Other characters that stood out to Raven on the quayside were a young lad whose appearance marked him as some Alkemisian sorcerer's apprentice and a Black Elf armed with a longbow and a wickedly curved scimitar. All in all there must have been fourteen passengers.

Once the crewmen had filled the hold with the cargo then Harpoon beckoned the passengers aboard. Raven boarded alongside the burly merchant whose massive hands were placed firmly on the shoulders of his daughter who he pushed along in front of him. The Black Elf brought up the rear. Within minutes of the gangway being drawn into the ship the *Storm Giant* was on its way along the coast.

'Make yourself at home in the cabin,' Harpoon told the assembled group of passengers on the deck. 'Not sure if there are enough stools for everyone? Anyway, as it warms up you're all more than welcome to come out on deck.'

The Black Elf had already made his way to the ship's prow pulling up his cloak hood as he did so. 'I'll remain here,' he said with a glare to Harpoon that suggested a challenge to his statement would be unwelcome.

Harpoon ignored the Black Elf and motioned for the others to head for the cabin behind them. The passengers quickly entered it and found there were plenty of stools and several goatskins of drinking water.

'I'm sure your journey will be a comfortable one,' said Harpoon as he stuck his head in the doorway. 'It'll be about five hours before we make Alkemis, maybe six depending on the currents. Any problems and you'll find me by the helm.'

As Harpoon disappeared from view, Raven grabbed a stool and sat down against the wall and again took stock of his fellow passengers. The merchants had already grouped themselves together in a rough circle and were chatting about business. The merchant's daughter was probably ten or eleven years old and although she was sat on her father's lap she was keenly staring at the sorcerer's apprentice who had his nose buried in an ancient manuscript. A book of spells most likely he thought to himself or perhaps a list of ingredients for potions given that the boy was around fourteen and was likely too young to have already begun spell casting. Raven suddenly realized that the Warrior Woman was missing from the room when her voice whispered into his left ear.
'I'm Dark Orchid, what business have you in Alkemis?'

'None,' he whispered back as he turned to stare into her dark brown eyes as she leant over him with her right hand resting on his shoulder and her left hand resting on his left thigh. 'I'm seeking passage to Port Blacksand. I'm sure I'll find it in Alkemis.'

Orchid flashed her eyes at him in a flirtatious manner. 'I see you're decidedly under armed. I thought you might be a Bounty Hunter. I've quite a price on my head.' Orchid left hand moved slightly closer up Raven's thigh and he suddenly felt cold steel between his legs. A stiletto shaped dagger was pushing against his genitals.

'I see,' Raven used his head to motion out the door. 'Perhaps the Black Elf is in that profession?'

'Oh no,' Orchid's eyes flashed again in reply. 'Hacksaw is my travelling companion.'

'That's nice.' Raven kept eye contact with the warrior-woman although part of him wanted to look down at her heaving chest.

'So, you're just a traveller to Blacksand?'

'I'm Birdy Raven and – '

'The same Birdy Raven who stole the Diadem of Samone?'

'Stole is a rather harsh word.'

'And you'll be the same Birdy Raven who desecrated the Temple of Zaragillia in Kaynlesh Ma some years ago, which caused quite a stir.'

'I liberated something that the corrupt priests there claimed was theirs when in fact they had taken it from a small shrine in a tiny village a few leagues away.'

'So, you're not just a traveller going to Blacksand, but an adventurer on the run.' The cold steel was removed from between his legs.

Raven smiled. 'I wouldn't say I was on the run, but I'd certainly say I was hoping to put some distance between myself and some men from Bei-Han that I recently did business with that didn't turn out quite the way I had planned.'

Orchid broke into a warm smile. 'I knew you weren't a Bounty Hunter when you wandered into the quay this morning. Had I thought differently your body would be fish food by now.'

'Now that we've introduced ourselves, why don't you take a seat?' Raven pointed at a nearby empty stool. 'I feel a bit nervous with you leaning over me.'

'A lot of men say that,' she replied as she grabbed the stool and sat down next to Raven ready to pass the time exchanging stories of their many adventures.

***

Raven heard the Elvish at the same time as Orchid leapt to her feet knocking her stool over unintentionally.

'Trouble,' she said as she made for the cabin door.

Raven followed her out onto the deck where the *Storm Giant*'s crew was stood on the port side of the ship staring out across the clear, sunny sky to three large birds on the horizon. At the prow, Hacksaw was also looking in the same direction. He turned to face Orchid and Raven. He shouted in Elvish and then threw the scimitar into Orchid's waiting hand at the same time as Harpoon came to see what the commotion was about.

'What in Titan's name is going on?' he said, nervously as he saw Orchid catch a hold of the scimitar with both grace and familiarity at wielding such a deadly weapon.

'Have you weapons, Captain?' She answered him.

He flashed his eyes.

'Have you anything that can be used as a weapon?'

The three large birds were moving rapidly towards the *Storm Giant*. At the prow, Hacksaw carefully slid an arrow into place on his longbow.

'We have some fishing spears and maybe some fish gutting blades lying around.'

Orchid nodded her head as she took in the information. 'They'll do. Tell your men to arm themselves.' She pointed to the approaching birds. 'Those aren't birds, Captain Harpoon. My Elven friend thinks they're some kind of Harpy.'

'Harpies,' muttered Raven under his breath, 'so far from land?'

Harpoon barked a few words at his crew and five of them immediately ran over to the trapdoor in the middle of the deck and as they heaved it open, two men dropped down into it and moments later were passing out some fishing spears topped with barbed hooks and two knives used for fish gutting.

Some of the merchants had stuck their heads out of the cabin to see what was happening. Harpoon had told them to stay inside. They obeyed without question.

'I need a better weapon than this dagger, 'Raven had pulled the blade from out of his right boot where it had been concealed and waved it to Orchid

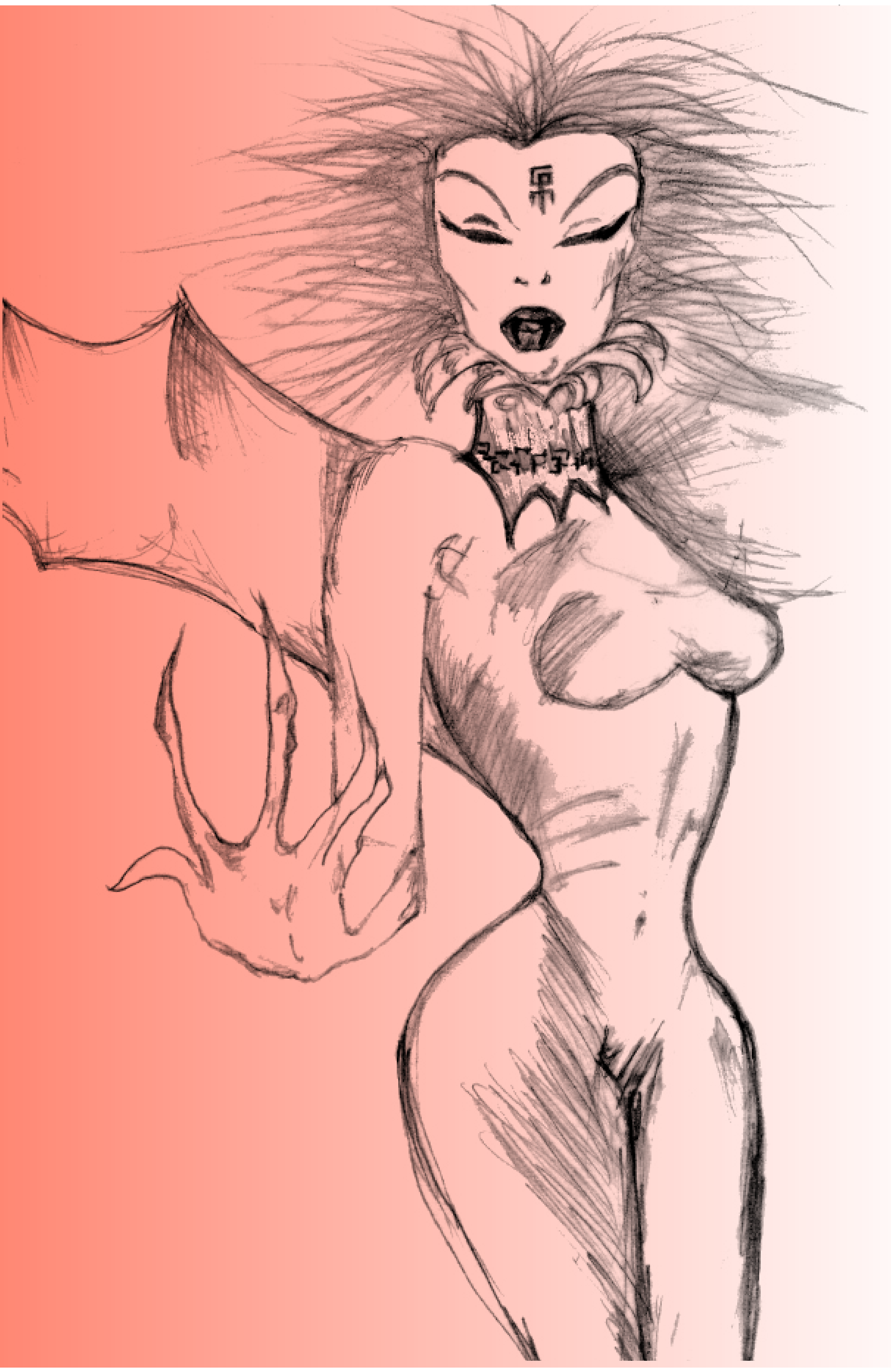
She shouted across to Hacksaw in Elvish who turned from aiming longbow at the Harpies and cast a disapproving look at Raven. Orchid again spoke in Elvish and the Black Elf bowed his head slightly. With one hand keeping the arrow locked in place on the bow his other hand reached under the back of his cloak to withdraw a short sword, which with a graceful spin of his body he threw with perfect precision at Raven who caught it with both hands having discarded the dagger to the ship's deck.

'Hacksaw has only two Elven arrows and maybe five or six man-made ones.' Orchid sighed and absentmindedly spun the scimitar in her hands waiting for the aerial attack that was about to happen. 'The human arrows won't work too well on his Elven bow. Guess we just don't make 'em like the Elves can.'

About two hundred meters from the *Storm Giant* the incoming Harpies split up and as one kept on coming straight, the other two swerved to the right and left respectively in order to circle the ship and attack from the prow and stern.

At the one hundred meter mark, Hacksaw released his arrow. It was of Elven origin.

The Harpy coming straight at the port side of the *Storm Giant*



made a slight cry of surprise and then dropped like a stone into the rolling waves of the Glimmering Sea.

Hacksaw immediately fired a second arrow at the Harpy circling towards the ship's stern. Raven couldn't see the arrow in flight, but the Harpy must have had better vision. It veered suddenly and rather awkwardly, but remained on course for the *Storm Giant*. Raven watched in awe as Hacksaw fired three arrows almost simultaneously at the same Harpy, but all of them dipped into the sea several meters short of their target.

'Man-made arrows,' he said half to himself and half for Orchid to hear.

'Yeah,' she replied, quietly, 'useless.'

With an unearthly bestial howl the Harpy that was dive bombing towards the stern of the ship came in at the gathered humans slashing at the terrified crewmen with its razor-sharp talons. As it swooped by, Raven ducked and felt he had just avoided being struck by either a giant bat or eagle. As the Harpy weaved past the main mast, the second Harpy swooped in low at Hacksaw who had exchanged the longbow for another short sword. Cackling manically the Harpy avoided the Black Elf's sword swing and managed to slash the arm of a crew man armed with a gutting knife. He howled in pain and threw himself to the deck clutching at the bloody wound.

'Get away from my ship you she-bitches,' Harpoon cried out as he used a fishing spear to jab the Harpy that had injured his crewman. He missed and the Harpy simply cackled at him as it veered away to turn and dive bomb the *Storm Giant* again.

It was just as the Harpy circled the ship to attack again that the merchant's daughter came running out onto the ship's deck.

Raven saw her first. 'Hey, sweetheart,' he said friendly but in a scolding tone of voice. 'Get back with your Father. It's not safe out here.'

Orchid had turned around to see who Raven was speaking to when she got sight of the look of sheer terror on the little girl's face. Instinctively, Orchid dropped to her haunches and slashed upwards and backwards at the same time with the scimitar as a Harpy rushed towards her from behind. The wicked blade cut deep into the creature's leg causing it to shriek in agony as it crashed into the deck of the ship.

The young girl screamed in terror.

As the Harpy tried to get up and fly off, Harpoon had thrust his fishing spear deep into its abdomen forcing it to remain on the deck; pinned in place on the wooden beams soaked in its own blood. It slashed out savagely as the other Crew members advanced towards it with a murderous look upon their faces.

It was Raven who saw the approaching second Harpy. It was aiming for the little girl. With only seconds to consider a strategy he opted to throw his sword at the approaching Harpy like a throwing knife. Raising he sword above his head with both hands, Raven released it with all his might. The arcing blade flew straight and true at the Harpy, which unexpectedly turned a 360° roll in flight just in the nick of time for the sword to only graze its right breast as it spun by at speed and embedded itself into the main mast with a deadening thud.

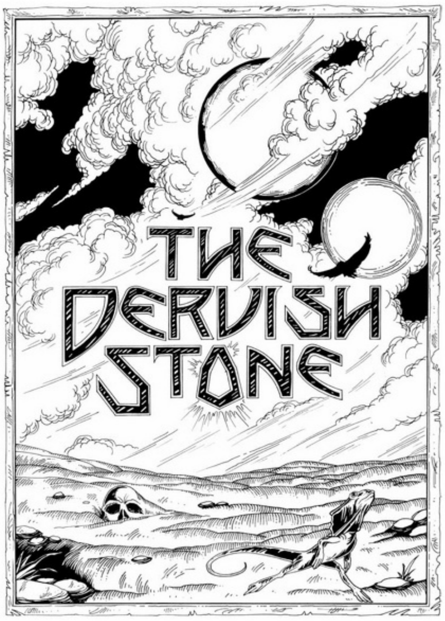
Both Raven and Orchid could only watch in surprise as the Harpy grabbed the terrified child and then climbed into the sky cursing the ship's contingent in corrupted Alkemisian. It then took a course flying back in the same direction it had come from with the others of its kind. The girl's continuous scream became fainter and fainter as her abductor carried her towards the horizon.

TO BE CONTINUED

Everything I Really Need to Know I Learnt from Playing the *Warlock* Mini-adventures

Back in the heyday of *Fighting Fantasy*, gamebook junkies could help stave off the withdrawal symptoms between new releases by turning their attention to the mini-adventures in *Warlock* magazine. Though approximately half the price and roughly half the length of the average *Fighting Fantasy* book, these proved no less invaluable in helping the readers make their way through life. **Ed Jolley** leafs through his collection to see what handy hints are contained within.

The Dervish Stone



While you are questing for treasure in (i.e. burgling) the smartest house in Alasiyan, its owner sets a bizarre hybrid of Troll, Hobgoblin and Ghoul on you (and trust me, you do not want to read the fanfic which explains how they breed such things). But fighting this travesty of nature is not the strangest part of the encounter. No, that comes next when, just before attempting to fry your face off with a fireball, the man pauses to introduce himself, as if this is some posh dinner party rather than a fight to the death. I'm surprised that the section covering the subsequent battle doesn't say something like, 'Throw one die every Attack Round. On a roll of 1 or 2, the Sorcerer-Governor makes small talk.'

Moral: Just because somebody's being polite to you, that doesn't necessarily mean they mean you no harm.

Dungeon of Justice

DUNGEON of JUSTICE

Are we supposed to believe that Elves don't leave any blood on weapons with which they're stabbed, and can't distinguish between dagger wounds and sword wounds? No, the Elves in this adventure clearly know that you're not actually guilty of the murder of which they accuse you, and just want a pretext for chucking you into their so-called Dungeon of Justice. And why do they want you in there? The fact that you can't succeed unless you fail a certain SKILL roll says it all. They're fed up of arrogant 12-24-12 adventurers swaggering about as if they own Allansia, and just want an excuse to riddle such types with arrows. But 'Dungeon of Justifying Killing Smug High-Statted Heroes' doesn't have quite the same ring to it, hence the misleading title.

Moral: Don't be fooled by bigots who try to legitimise their prejudices with respectable-sounding jargon.

The Dark Chronicles of Anakendis

Once, Traskannd was viewed as a tragic figure. The people of Kokbridge knew him to be an honourable adventurer who failed to resist the dark sorceries of Anakendis, and wound up magically compelled to serve the evil wizard, eventually finding merciful release in death. But then someone found the rather gruesome pictures in his room and uncharitably leapt to the conclusion that his favourite pastime must have been fantasising about people being hideously tortured, and what little remained of the ex-hero's reputation vanished faster than the rungs on an Imp's ladder.

Moral: There may genuinely be an interview that interests you in that adult mag, but nobody will ever believe that that's really what attracted you to it.

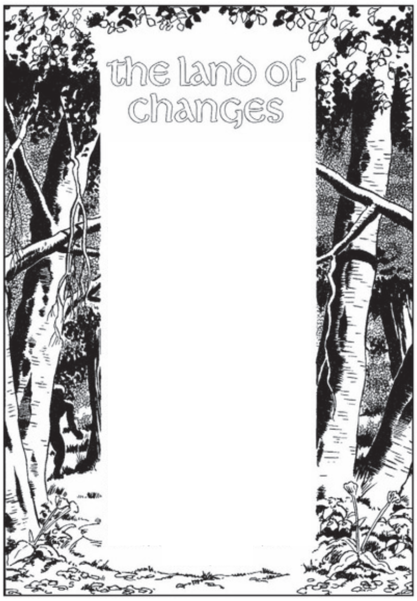
The Temple of Testing

A suite of rooms within the Temple serves to recapitulate the Conquering cycle of the Elements, each room providing what is necessary for you to be able to get through the next one in the sequence. Which does rather contradict the 'all paths through life are equally valid' message the Temple layout is supposed to reflect. Start at the wrong end of the chain of rooms, or enter one of the inner rooms from the wrong direction, and you won't get very far. Thus, what it actually indicates is that, however you choose to live your life, sooner or later you're going to have to do things the way someone else wants you to after all. So much for free will!

Moral: Some really are more equal than others.

The Floating City

If gamebooks had an equivalent to the Darwin Award, it should probably be called the Pracy Award, in honour of the writer who excels at heaping scorn on heroes who make unwise decisions. Ironically, a prime candidate for this award can be encountered in this, her first published adventure. The Angekok, like many powerful wizards, is particu-



larly vulnerable to a certain magical weapon. Where he differs from most of his kind is in leaving that weapon propped up outside his own front door, where any passing aggressive thug could pick it up to use against him. Even the must clueless Evil Overlord knows better than to make it that easy for his enemies.
Moral: More often than not, the faults we are quickest to condemn in others are ones of which we ourselves are very, very guilty.

Fortress Throngard

Wishing to rescue Sir Falfax the Fair from the dungeons of the eponymous fortress, you decide to conceal a knife and picklock on your person and then allow yourself to be captured by Throngard's minions. Pity you didn't think of adding a compass to your escape kit too, as your lack of one makes all directions relative to the way you're facing. So if you planned to go left when you left your cell, but first chose to cross the corridor, you might get cross if you don't realise that that direction is now right, right? And on the other hand, if you had no intention of turning left, you'd be right to remember that you're now left with no choice but to go left because what was left is now right but still wrong if you were right about right being right. All right?
Moral: Subjectivity isn't necessarily a bad thing, but do try to keep things in perspective.

FORTRESS THRONGARD

Rogue Mage

You're on trial, and the best you can hope for is a suspended sentence (in the sense of being hanged). Then a representative of the Guild of Magicians intervenes, which you know to be a turn for the worse. And how bad does it get? Well, instead of the quick execution you anticipated, you're going to have to go on an adventure which involves almost no Instant Deaths, pits you against opponents which may have a SKILL as high as 10, and may well wind up burdening you with large sums of money. Let's be honest – it's not exactly Guantanamo Bay, now is it?
Moral: Don't be so quick to assume the worst in every situation. Things may well not be as bad as they seem.

The Land of Changes

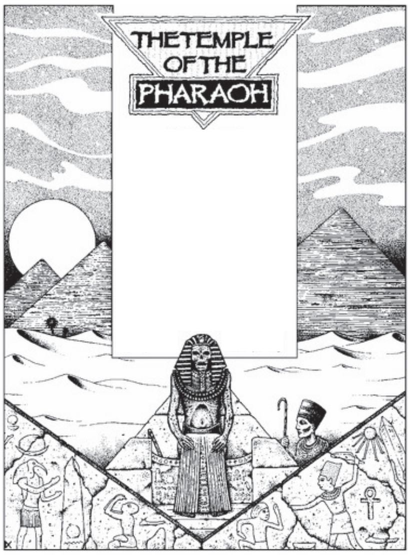
Should you accept the Moss Maiden's quest, she tells you that her name is Lina, advises you to 'remember the letter of' her name, and sends you to a pillar of rock inscribed with the letters A, J, L and Z. You might well remember one of those alphabet training rhymes for small children (I believe the Titan version goes something like: "A for Assassin, his knife in your back. B is for Blood, that's been spilled on the track," and so on), think, 'L is for Lina' and touch the 'L'. However, such a literalist interpretation of the clue would lead to your being blasted into your component atoms. Which may in turn lead to your copy of *Warlock* #11 being thrown against a wall with considerable force.
Moral: Take care when giving instructions. What seems obvious to you might not be so self-evident to others.

Deadline to Destruction

Summoned to Titan City chemical plant, you may be a little put out to find that, rather than being required to avert some life-threatening catastrophe, you have been called in to help fix a leaky pipe that carries an unharmful but expensive chemical. However, you should probably be more concerned about the damage you're liable to incur from the toxic effects of this substance. Call me a pedant if you will, but I'm going to suggest that the foreman might not have been using quite the right words when he said the stuff wasn't dangerous.
Moral: Not all villains wear silly costumes. Some of the worst prefer business suits.

The Temple of the Pharaoh

One of the explorers who found the Temple of Terratakamen before you must have been remarkably talented. While hanging chained to a wall and left to die, he somehow managed to write one final diary entry and then slip his notebook back into his pocket for you to find. The degree of flexibility required for him to perform such a feat must surely have been more than enough to enable him to extricate himself from the chains and attempt escape, but evidently he was so busy jotting down clues for his successor that this never occurred to him. Twit!
Moral: Every now and then, stop and consider whether or not you're making the best use of your skills, or you might end up regretting wasted opportunities.

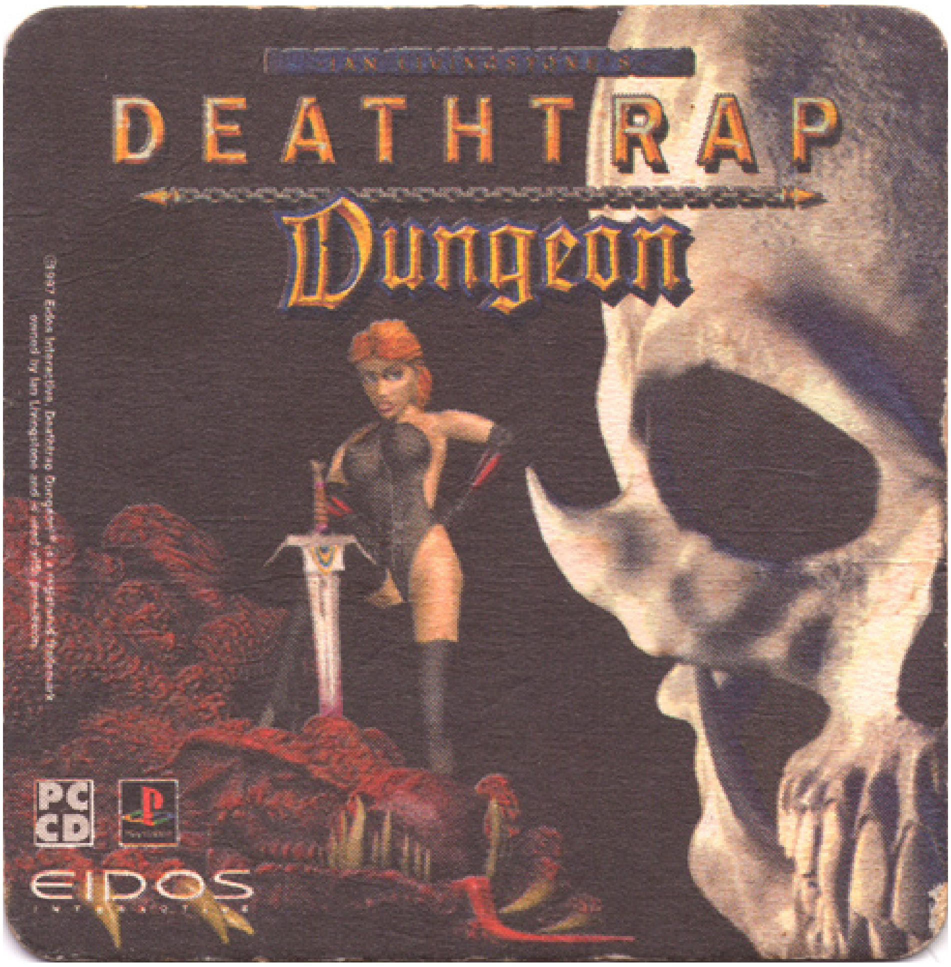

THE TEMPLE OF THE PHARAOH

www.fightingfantasycollector.co.uk

Collector **Jamie Fry** ponders the limits of a collector's knowledge, the proposed *Fighting Fantasy* film and a few other collecting tidbits.

Wonders never cease to amaze me, I think what keeps me going on collecting is the unknown and what I might come across or the thrill of the random find. I am speaking from experience and especially about two finds that came to my attention since the last issue through another collector that posted them on the Titan Rebuilding Yahoo! forum (see page 2 for URL) and I have neither.

One I had heard of as a pure rumour and the other is completely new to me, which I find amazing after all these years. The first I am talking about is the *Deathtrap Dungeon* beer mat, depicting the Eidos software artwork of the game on one side and Lara Croft from the *Tomb Raider* games on the other. The second was a folded A3 poster/flyer which I understand was found loose inside the *Poster Book*. I believe it was released to coincide with the 10th Anniversary box set depicting similar artwork. The least I could do was share the pictures on my site for all to see. They were such a new entity to me they barely made it into the *Collector's Guide* at the last minute. I suggest they would command around the £5 mark,


IAN LIVINGSTONE'S
DEATHTRAP
Dungeon
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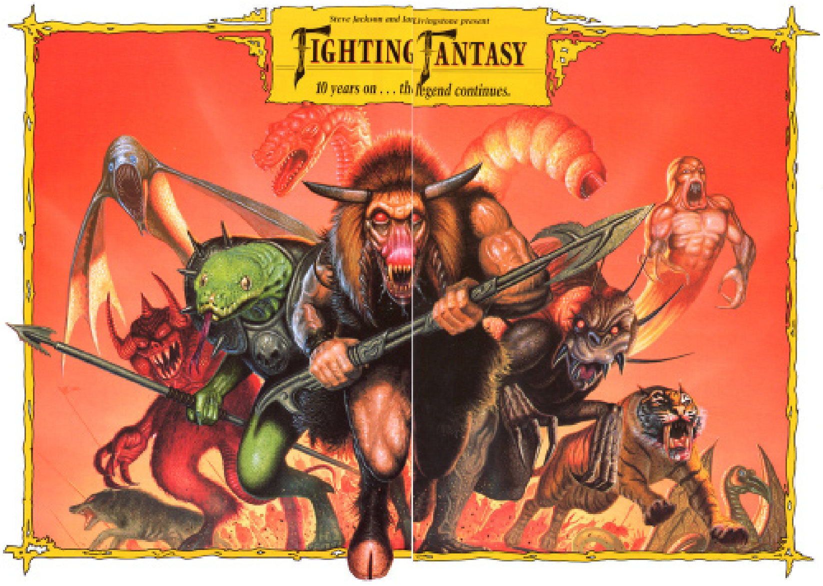
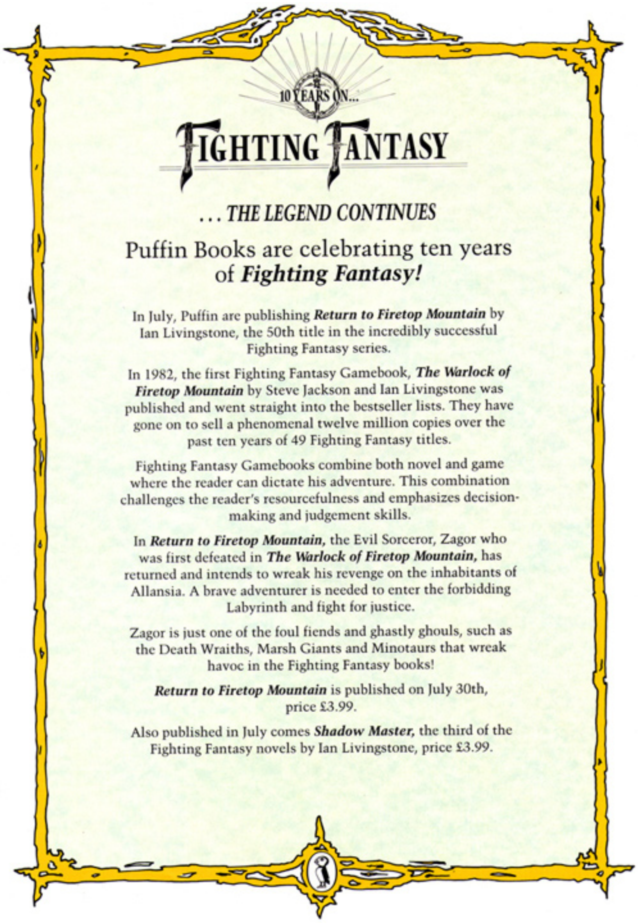

Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone present
FIGHTING FANTASY
10 years on . . . the legend continues.



10 YEARS ON...

FIGHTING FANTASY

. . . THE LEGEND CONTINUES

Puffin Books are celebrating ten years of ***Fighting Fantasy!***

In July, Puffin are publishing ***Return to Firetop Mountain*** by Ian Livingstone, the 50th title in the incredibly successful Fighting Fantasy series.

In 1982, the first Fighting Fantasy Gamebook, ***The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*** by Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone was published and went straight into the bestseller lists. They have gone on to sell a phenomenal twelve million copies over the past ten years of 49 Fighting Fantasy titles.

Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks combine both novel and game where the reader can dictate his adventure. This combination challenges the reader's resourcefulness and emphasizes decision-making and judgement skills.

In ***Return to Firetop Mountain,*** the Evil Sorceror, Zagor who was first defeated in ***The Warlock of Firetop Mountain,*** has returned and intends to wreak his revenge on the inhabitants of Allansia. A brave adventurer is needed to enter the forbidding Labyrinth and fight for justice.

Zagor is just one of the foul fiends and ghastly ghouls, such as the Death Wraiths, Marsh Giants and Minotaurs that wreak havoc in the Fighting Fantasy books!

Return to Firetop Mountain is published on July 30th, price £3.99.

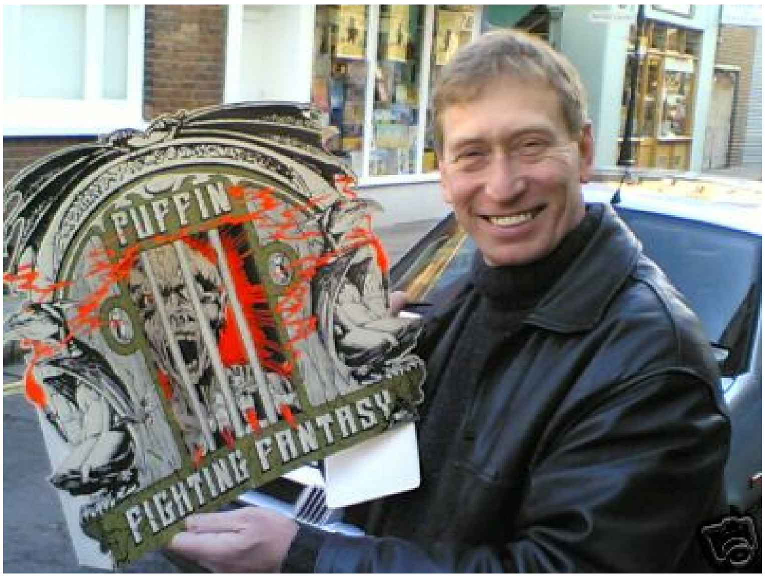
Also published in July comes ***Shadow Master,*** the third of the Fighting Fantasy novels by Ian Livingstone, price £3.99.

Top right: The *Deathtrap Dungeon* video game beer mat. Left: The front of the fold-out poster/flyer that came with the 1992 *Poster Book*. Right: One part of the back side of the same poster. Opposite page: Steve Jackson and the zombie point of sale display.

maybe more as they are so rare.

At the time the proposed *House of Hell* movie was announced I managed to capture some commentary from the forums and as a result I contacted Steve Jackson for his opinion on the fan's opinions shared below.

> *"Hands up who doesn't think this will be another in a long line of cookie cutter generic horror movies with lashing of pretty young things (hence the young couple) with few, if any, genuine scares?"*
>
> *"I watched the descriptive trailer and the narrator commented on how the creators (presumable Steve Jackson) held off to this point because of movies' tendency to drastically change the content of a book when adapted to the big screen. Interesting, then, that right off the bat there's a major change – the trailer describes a young couple being stranded and having to take refuge in the house, (where of course, the book just had the one main character, or YOU). I'm really interested in seeing how true to the book the movie actually stays – will there be an Earl of Drummer? A Hell demon? A hunchback? For that matter, how much of the book that's off of the victory path will be included in the movie."*



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Steve was very receptive and welcomes any feedback as it is such early days.

I have already made contact with the makers and hope to get called to Pinewood Studios some time soon (not!) for a trial. They did say they would get back to me but I don't hold out much hope.

What does everyone think about the quality of the "Series 2" books? I have to say I am not that impressed, the paper let's them down and they aren't sitting on my shelf so well. I have always thought that with all the abuse these gamebooks get I would have expected them to be released one day in a special edition hardback version very much like the 25th Anniversary edition of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* was in 2007 or the recent releases of the *Lone Wolf* series in this format. From a collector's point of view this would make a nice addition.

Can anyone explain to me why *Allansia* commands so much money? I understand why the last few books of the original series (numbers 57-59) do because of the limited print run but even then if *Allansia* had a single, low print run why is it worth even more. To drop *Lone Wolf* into the conversation again, I have noted that the latter numbers of that series are going for over £100 compared to £25-£35 each for numbers 57-59 or *Allansia* for a bit more, not sure why though.

Just the other day I was approached by a fan looking for a particular piece of artwork he remembers seeing in one of the *Sorcery!* books of a face in a sun. I immediately knew what he meant and shared a scan with him out of *The Seven Serpents* (book 3 in the series). He wanted it so that he could get a tattoo of it. I already have two of my own and toyed with the idea of getting an *Fighting Fantasy*-related tattoo to join them. My focus was actually on the original logo but my wife talked me out of it. It had occurred to me though that an *Fighting Fantasy* tattoo would make an awesome addition to my collection and it would stay with me forever! For now I will settle for a large dragon down the top half of my right arm.

I would like to share another titbit I found on the *Fighting Fantasy* mailing list forums by Darren Blizzard in September 1999.

> *"Just going back to the first time I bought the books, I remember they were from a newsagent in a semi-country coastal town called Warnambool (Aussie fans will know where that is). I was 11 or 12 and I was on holidays with the family. In the newsagent where the books were was this huge cardboard stand that had the dragon from the cover of* Warlock of Firetop Mountain *all over it. Now, that would be great collectible to get that I bet no one considered."*

I hadn't considered this as a collectable before, mainly because I wasn't aware of them and hardly expected something like this to survive. Any news of one or pictures would be useful for the website and I will add it to the collectors guide but right now cannot decide on a value, maybe £30-40? I do however have an original Puffin books point of sale shop display with a zombie behind bars, much like the box set of a similar design. As it happens it belonged to Steve Jackson himself and according to the company (They Walk Among Us) he was selling it through and whom I bought it from, it had come from his personal collection and this piece in particular was sat in his office. To my amazement in researching this article I also discovered that my original Clarecraft Shape Changer (from *The Forest of Doom*) figurine, that I bought from the same company, was also from Steve's personal collection according to the advert!

Lastly, I am disappointed that I could not make the Games Expo in London this year and a particular hi to fellow collector Steve Dean whom I would have liked to have met for a chat, maybe next year or another day. Some of you may have noticed me on the forums thinking of thinning out my collection in this difficult economic climate, it hasn't happened yet but it still might have to in order to raise some cash. I have toyed with the idea of expanding my basic guide one day to a full on pictorial guide and text. I have approached Steve and Ian who are supportive but I would need financial recognition if it went as far as being published, watch this space.

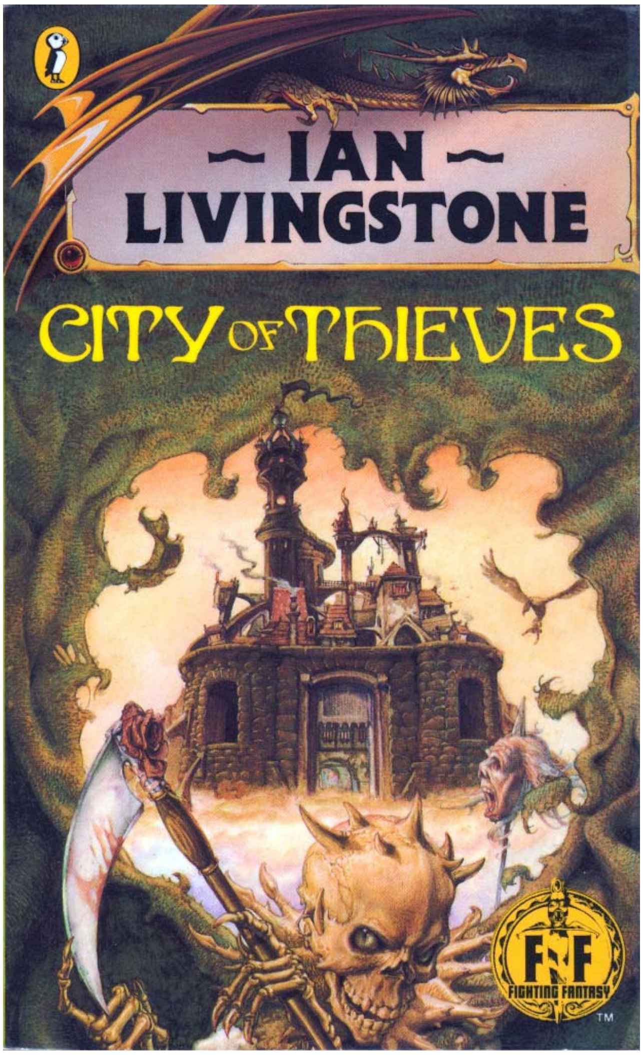
FIGHTING DANTASY

Dan revisits the Fighting Fantasy series, one gamebook at a time...

Remember reading your first *Fighting Fantasy* adventure? The desperate search for the items you need to win, the frantic dice rolls as you fight to stay in one piece mere paragraphs from your goal? **Dan Satherley** has decided to recreate those tense moments from our childhoods by working his way through the series book by book and recording his efforts as he goes.

After the outer space diversions of *Starship Traveller*, it's a relief to back on Allansian soil and carrying nought but a sword, some gold and the classic 10 evenly-portioned parcels of food.

But that's not to say *Fighting Fantasy*'s fifth book is a retread of the first three; not at all. Yeah, you're an adventurer in search of booty and whatnot... but *City of Thieves* introduces us to the most notorious city in Allansia, Port Blacksand.



You're an adventurer/bounty hunter kind of guy who comes across a town, Silverton, which is being harassed by an evil wizard – the humorously titled Zanzar Bone. He sounds like some kind of glam rocker, what with that name and the Moon Dogs and Spirit Walkers he uses to terrorise the town.

Your mission is to go to Port Blacksand (a "wretched hive of scum and villainy", to quote Obi Wan, which does its best to keep good, law-abiding folk out) and find Nicodemus – a powerful wizard on the side of good.

The first thing I have to do to get into the city is to kill or bribe a guard. Hmm. Well, I rolled high SKILL and STAMINA scores, so there's no guessing which I did.

Next I turned left, and saw a locksmith. I figured I'll probably need a key of some sort during the adventure - why else would I notice a locksmith and not, say, a sign with a map, perhaps pointing out where all the bars, loos and powerful wizards are?

Then I was suddenly hit by six arrows, courtesy of a terrible dice roll, and killed. Oh dear.

This wouldn't be much of a column if that was where it ended, so I re-rolled my stats, and started again – this time I'm not as strong, so tried to talk my way in past the guard. I said I had some expensive chalices to sell – which I most certainly did not – and the guard said he wanted to see them. I told him they were cursed, and could only be examined by a mage – who knows, perhaps he'd tell me where Nicodemus lived – and that didn't work.

Bribery did though.

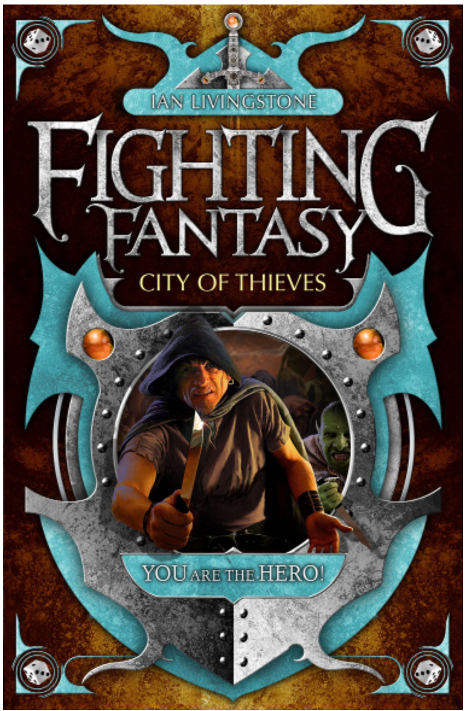
I took a winding route throughout the city, and soon realised not to trust anyone, but interact with them anyway – you never know when a blessing could come in disguise, huh? Money came and went as I found it and lost it (most embarrassingly when I was outwitted by a trio of dwarfs), till eventually I came across a man on a bridge. The book told me I gave him two gold pieces in exchange for being told where Nicodemus lived; which I found rather amusing as I'd just lost all my money playing "Don't Drop the Cannonball" with a man who looked like a Greek statue.

Nicodemus lived right beneath the bridge anyway, and I'm sure the text would have led me there eventually, so I hope that guy enjoyed his pretend, invisible money.

Nicodemus told me to do the job myself, and that before I met Zanzar Bowie I'd have to get a tattoo of a white unicorn inside a yellow sun – on my forehead. Damn hippie. He also said I'd need a silver arrow, a black pearl, some hag's hair and a lotus flower. Conveniently, I'd not come across any of these things, but soon would – it's like the city's collective consciousness knew to present me with these things after meeting Nicodemus, knowing I'd probably ignore them beforehand.

Well, I know never throw any collectables away in *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks, Collective Consciousness of Port Blacksand, so there!

Anyway. I eventually came across a pirate ship, which seemed



too good an opportunity to pass up. I dealt to the crew, and soon found myself back on dry land fighting a group of robbers, or as I was calling them by this point, average everyday Port Blacksanders. They almost killed me, as did some haunted plant which drove me down to a single point of stamina. I had no food either, having traded it all for a silver arrow.

So when a boy came up to me offering to sell me either plums or apples, I was ecstatic. He recommended the plums, and knowing this town pretty well by now I chose the apples, and they were a bit off, doing a single point of STAMINA damage.

Problem: I only had one point left. Yep, I was killed by an apple marginally past its use-by-date.

So as an introduction to Port Blacksand, an important locale in the *Fighting Fantasy* series, it does well. By the end I wasn't even trusting well-meaning young fruiterers, and was avoiding even the most minimally-threatening sounding encounters – I walked right past an inviting manhole cover, for crying out loud! The fact I passed perhaps the only manhole cover in the entire city (I'd been down a few streets by this stage, and I hadn't been told of any others) and didn't check it out speaks volumes.

Jabba the Hutt would've loved it here, except for the fact I don't think I came across any women – bar the old hag who picked my pocket. There was a sweet lute player though, who could've given the Mos Eisley cantina band some much-needed variation.

I'm not even sure why someone would bother helping the townsfolk of Silverton anyway – they seem a stupid bunch.

So, once again I failed to even reach the primary villain, damnit. I recall these books being easier when I was younger – perhaps then I was a little more open to re-rolls and checking the consequences of a decision before making it!

I need some weighted dice.

Adapted from Fightingdantasy.blogspot.com

turn to paragraph 1.

COMING IN ISSUE #5
JANUARY 2011

DUNGEONS & DINOSAURS

Fighting Fantasy artist **John Sibbick** is interviewed, mixing the creatures of fantasy with those of the prehistoric past. What do these fantastic beasts have in common?

BONES OF THE BANISHED

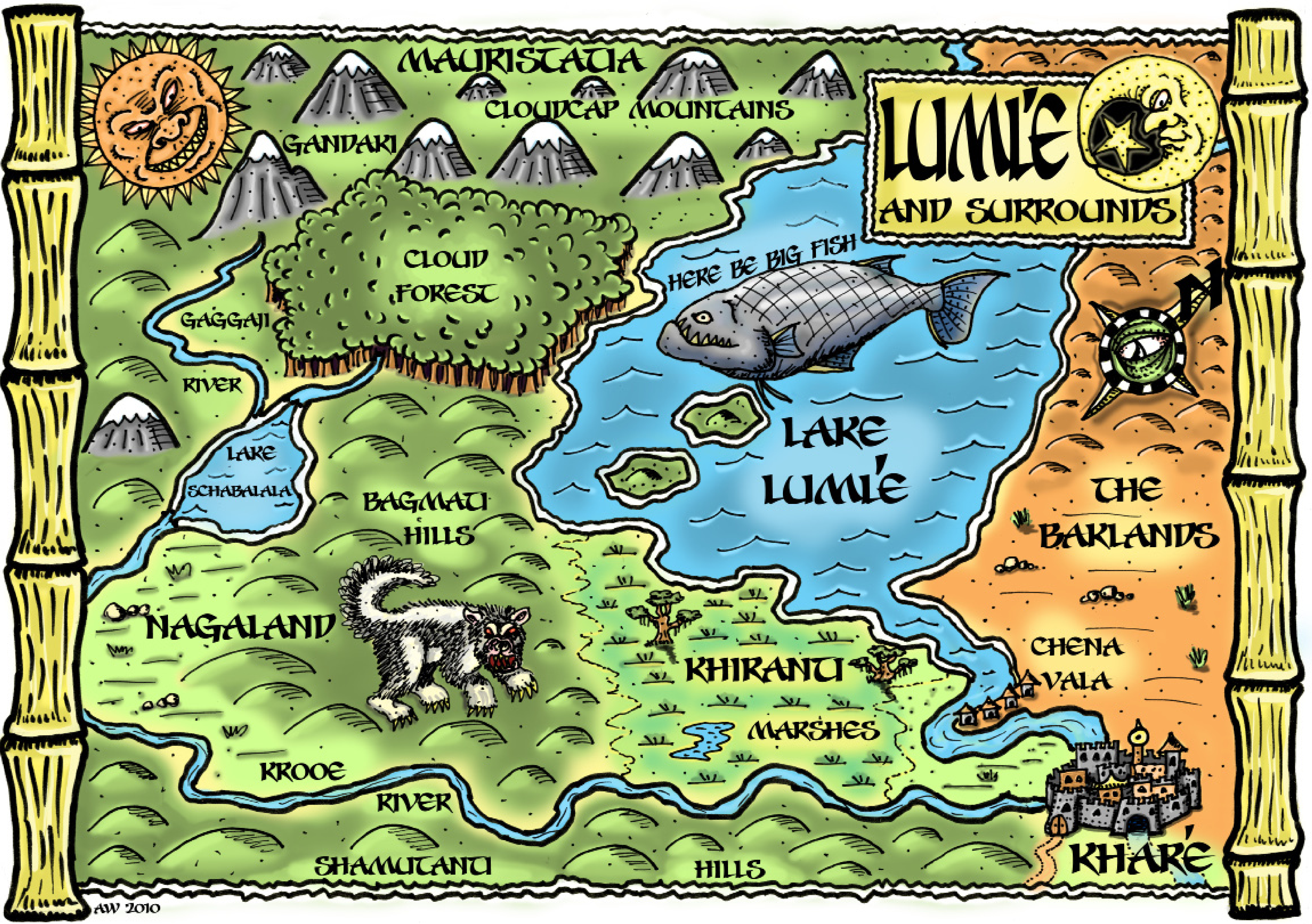
by **Brett Schofield**

YOUR tribe calls the Plain of Bones home and the death of your chieftain forces the start of the Rite of Banishment. All of the warriors are forced to venture into the danger-riddled wilderness. The one who returns with the most impressive trophy of conquest will become the new chieftain. Do YOU have what it takes or will your remains join the other bones of the banished?

Survey Results

We finally have the results of the survey and count down the seventy gamebooks of the *Fighting Fantasy* range to reveal which one was YOUR (collective) favourite! Find out how all the books did...

and
much
more!


LUMIÉ
AND SURROUNDS
MAURISTATIA
CLOUDCAP MOUNTAINS
GANDAKI
CLOUD FOREST
GAGGAJI
RIVER
LAKE SCHABALALA
BAGMATI HILLS
HERE BE BIG FISH
LAKE LUMIÉ
THE BAKLANDS
CHENA VALA
NAGALAND
KHIRANTI
MARSHES
KROOE
RIVER
SHAMUTANTI
HILLS
KHARÉ

AW 2010